Mary: The Perfect Woman

by Emily Mary Shapcote

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Prefatory Material

Dedication

To Jesus, Our Alpha and Our Omega, and Mary, The Handmaiden of the Lord, with humble, trembling devotion, sit Laus et Benedictio.

Foreword

As long as we live here, in the midst of innumerable storms and tempests, let the voice of each heart, in its own tune, and in its own measure, and in its own place, ceaselessly resound in the Highest before the Throne. And let the fragrance also of spotless conversation pour forth its sweet savour like everlasting incense, and redound to its own principle; so that as the heavens have dropped with honey by the admirable Advent of the Word of God, the Bridegroom Jesus, in the Flesh, and by the daily presenting Himself upon the altar, and by the frequent pouring forth of His Holy Spirit and of spiritual beauty on the souls of the elect; even so in their measure, let the desires of each ascend on every side, correspond everywhere with grace, and extend themselves and their love one towards another into infinite latitude.

- *from "The Fiery Soliloquy with God", by Master Gerlac Petersen, Canon Regular of Deventer (a contemporary of Thomas a Kempis)*

Preface

I am pleased to write a few words of Preface to the poem MARY: THE PERFECT WOMAN.

To have a hand, however slight and feeble, in anything that redounds to the honour of our Heavenly Mother is a privilege that is of the nature of a Divine Grace.

We may say much; but can never praise her enough. She is beyond all human praise. Chosen by God to be His Mother, what wonder that her

power, her magnificence, her goodness, her holiness are beyond the grasp of any human estimate? To belong integrally and intimately to the Order of the Hypostatic Union, by having been the conscious and deliberate instrument of its accomplishment, is to share an elevation more sublime than anything open to men or angels.

And yet this same Immaculate and sublime Creature owes her unsurpassable privilege not only to God, but to us sinners. We can say to her, in pleading to be covered by her eyes of mercy, that *she owes all to us*: and that we claim her care in gratitude. Had not mankind fallen into the abyss of sin and misery, God would never have manifested His attribute of mercy, *misericors et miserator Dominus*, in the way He has done. But because He beheld us miserable sinners, lost in our utterly helpless misery, He showed Himself as the 'heart for the miserable' - He revealed Himself as *misericors*. In mercy, in love for the rrtiserable, He deigned to become our Redeemer: and thus to need a Mother - a Mother to Him who is essentially *misericors*, a Mother to us who were in the depths of misery. *Felix culpa*, sings the Church, which has called forth such a Redeemer: *Felix culpa*, sings the Glorious Virgin Mother, because on its account I have been made the Mother of the *Misericors* - the Mother of Mercy. Is she not, therefore, in some sense our debtor? and may we not plead with her all the more tenderly and confidently that her eyes of mercy may cover, penetrate and fill us, and never be removed from us while we are still amid the perils of this life of sorrow and suffering?

Sweet Mother, thou can'st not be too often or too lovingly thought of, hymned and praised. God gives a child to its mother on earth, and fills the heart of the mother and her infant with a mutual love that binds them together with an enraptured love that no man questions. This is but the beautiful natural type of which the love and confidence between Mary and the soul animated by the spirit of Christ is the antitype and the fulfilment. Each is a work of God, differing in perfection, as the temporal differs from the eternal.

Jealousy and denial of this is the work of Satan, and it runs through heresy, which is a lie against the truth. She, whose mission it has been from the beginning to crush his head and to destroy his power, must necessarily be

feared, maligned and hated by the archenemy of mankind and by all his seed. Heresy is nothing but the spawn of the devil; and she, through and with her Divine Son, is ever the final destruction of all heresy. Heresy, therefore, and the devil are incapable of love for Mary. The signs and proofs of heresy, alas, are all around us. We can only pray to this Mother of Compassion once more to assert her sway and triumph.

I gladly bespeak for the following Marian Epic a kindly and devout reception. It reminds one of the *Mariale* attributed to our own Saint Anselm. The same strain of. love and admiration runs through both; and, though the metre in each is different, the fact that the metre in neither ever changes produces on the ear a sameness and monotony of rhythm in each, which has advantages and drawbacks.

In any case, this is an Epic full of love for Mary, our Incomparable Mother, the Advocate, the Hope and the Refuge of sinners. *Qui potest capere capiat*.

- *Herbert Cardinal Vaughan,*
- *Archbishop of Westminster, England*
- *In Fest. Fugae in AEgyptum, 1903*

Introduction

I

The Mystical History of our Blessed Lady carries us back into the abysses of Eternity. Its beginning - if ever it had a beginning - is to be sought for in the Eternal Counsels of God. In the Office of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the following Chapter from Holy Scripture occurs: ‘The Ix>rd possessed me in the beginning of His ways, before He made anything from the beginning. I was set up from eternity and of old, before the earth was made. The depths were not as yet, and I was already conceived.’ (Proverbs 8:22,23)

Time itself was not created when already the Virgin Mother of the Divine Word was conceived in the purposes of creation.

It is a remarkable circumstance that this passage and many others applied by the Holy Spirit of God - ruling the pronouncements of Holy Church - to the Virgin Mother, refer also, and in the first place, to the Eternal Wisdom of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Very Son of God, who, from all eternity, designed for Himself a created nature, and an Immaculate Dwelling in which He intended to assume it. For the words of the Seer go on to declare, that ‘Wisdom hath built herself a House: She hath hewn her out seven pillars.’ (Proverbs 9:1), which House was the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Wisdom, therefore, who is God the Word, the Creator of all things, and the House of Wisdom, who is the Immaculate Virgin Mother, are thus mystically connected in the very depths of Eternal Being.

In this same passage of antecedent vision, we are, as it were, drawn into the presence of that glorious self-existent Entity, and contemplate with a diffident but loving emotion this Immaculate Conception, ever present before the Divine Mind: and when, treading forward in the track of the previous interpretation of Holy Church, we perceive the created human entity of the most pure, the most perfectly lovely of all created beings, looking on the work of Creation as effected by Eternal Wisdom, we read with a new light and a fresh meaning the following words: ‘I was with Him forming all things, and was delighted every day; playing before Him at all times; playing in the world: and my delights were to be with the sons of men.’ (Proverbs 8:30,31. see Rhythm 3. stanzas 3,11. 4,5.)

This picture of the mystic union of created perfection, with Uncreated Wisdom, is, as far as we are concerned, the beginning of the history of the Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Lady: and I venture to think that it lies at the root of God’s dealings with mankind.

The contemplation of our Lady’s mystical presence during the primeval ages of creation, of itself carries us tenderly forward to those scenes in time, when this same vision of perfect human loveliness, and of oneness with Creating Wisdom, appears in the midst of the Divine work of recreating a nature which had lost the graces of its immaculate origin; and appears too in all the perfection of the invincible strength of its union with the Divine purpose and will. She who has just been represented to us mystically, as

looking on and admiring joyously the creative work of Divine Fingers, now actually stands before us in Flesh and Blood, watching and sharing in the work of re-creation and of redemption: looking on and doing her part with all the heroism of self-sacrifice, supported by the same Spirit with His, and by the same principle of charity and fervent desire for the salvation of souls.

This brief contemplation opens out for us the Mystic History in time and in eternity of the ‘Perfect Woman,’ the Mother and the Companion of God Incarnate - of the God who loves to call Himself the ‘Son of Mary.’

It would, indeed, seem that our Blessed Lord delights to be with the children of men, seeing that He has bestowed upon them a nature, which, in its perfection, is a fitting tabernacle for Himself. In her whom He made to be His Mother, it has been brought to its perfection: not only by its Immaculate Conception, but by sufferings only rivalled by His own; ‘and whereas indeed He was the Son of God, He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.’ (Hebrews 5:8) He has given her to be our Model and our Mother: our Mother, in our regenerate nature; our Mother, in all the necessities and trials of our state; our Mother, as our Intercessor and Pleader with God: our Model in our lives, and in the devoted self-sacrificing love which we owe to Him before all things. She is also the Model and Archetype of those glorious perfections which will be the crown of the collected assembly of the redeemed, the New Jerusalem, which, adorned as a bride, will be the eternal trophy of His inconceivable love for the children of men.

II

Human existence as a whole is made up of two lives, the outward and the inward, the corporal and the spiritual. The actions which follow each other ceaselessly in the course of the day, and the circumstances attending them, have in themselves neither merit nor demerit; they are neither good nor bad: but, according as the ruling spirit and intention are good or bad, natural or supernatural, the actions resulting partake of the same character.

In our Blessed Lady these two lives were in perfect adjustment, because her entire nature, bodily as well as spiritual, was without a flaw. The outer life was the expression of the inner, and the inner permeated the outer, because

her life was all one: it was hidden in God; it was wrapt up in the Life of Jesus.

This is one reason of the silence of Holy Scripture concerning her, beyond what is necessary for the revelation and confirmation of the Mysteries of the Incarnation. But this is sufficient in order to comprehend and read the rest. Her soul was the mirror of His, her spirit was conformed to His; and not a moment of her time, not a thought of her heart, not an act of her will but was governed and glorified by the mystic union of her created will with the Will of God. From infancy she had lived in the Presence of God with the simplicity of a child, and had given herself unreservedly to the Divine Love which enclosed her on every side. Hers was a life of uninterrupted communion with God; of secret prayer -and of longing for the Advent of the Deliverer of her people. Such a life would be naturally simple, modest, retired, and earnest in all outward duties. But, when we reflect on the simplicity of her active life, in connection with her supernatural vocation which she never ceased to fulfil, we are compelled to say of our Blessed Lady what Saint John said of our Lord: ‘She was in the world and the world knew her not.’

III

The mystic history of our Lady includes three periods, that of her natural life being the centre one. Her antecedents we have seen lie in the Eternal Bosom of God: and her natural life being ended, she re-entered into the same abyss, clothed in glorified human nature, to take her place as the Mother of the King, and the Queen of His Kingdom, in the glory of the Beatific Vision.

Following this line of thought, the story of the ‘Perfect Woman’ has been written under three heads:

1. The Incarnation and the Immaculate Conception of Mary:

2. The Redeemer and the Co-redemptrix:

3. The Kingdom of God and the Queenship of Mary.

In the First place, I have endeavoured to show how the restored character of sinlessness in the person of our Blessed Lady, and the splendour of her vocation in the work of the Incarnation, lie in the heart of all the devotion that has been given her from the beginning of the history of the Church; how she has been the Hope of Prophets, and the Star of the Night through the spiritual obscurity of history; and how this gleam of light runs through the whole of Holy Scripture. I have humbly desired to show with what perfection of fitness Almighty God had prepared for Himself a Gate, through which to pass with dignity into the poor theatre of a human existence; and, with these impressions added to the picture which gradually formed itself before my spiritual gaze, I have consistently tried to follow the idea of the Incarnation and its object in connection with the Immaculate Conception of Blessed Mary.

This First Part concludes with the death of Saint Joseph; his supposed reception among the Fathers in Limbo; and his revelation to the First Mother of Mankind, of the fulfilment of all prophecy in the Immaculate Conception of her Daughter, Mary.

The Second Part follows the course of the Ministry and Passion of our Divine Lord. It treats of the position and co-operation of our Blessed Lady with regard to both. We begin by reviewing the origin of sin and of rebellion in creation; the fall of our First Parents from original justice; the rapid progress and utter destructiveness of sin; and the insufficiency even of a Divine Law to restore the lost innocence of man. (Rhythms 70 to 76.)

The Ministry of our Lord opens with the 77th Rhythm, when Mother and Son quit their home at Nazareth, and their union in suffering begins. The first feature of our Lady’s mystic vocation in Redemption is developed in the Marriage Feast of Cana in Galilee (Rhythm 83), i.e., the narrative of her all-powerful intercession; as also the lesson she teaches us of modesty, of humility, and of confidence in the love of her Divine Son. It gives the key-note to her ministry in the Kingdom of Grace, in the gracious sympathy of her womanly character. Some incidents follow this one, connected with her presence, proving her to have accompanied Him in His missions; and in the 95th Rhythm, I have alluded to a received tradition, in which our Lord is said to have prepared His Mother for the Sacrifice of Himself that He was

about to make, by asking her permission so to do - thus giving to her Maternity the opportunity to merit in a manner she could not otherwise be said to have had.

In this act two things are to be remarked: firstly, an act of union between the Mother and the Son. ‘Oblatus est quia Ipse voluit,’ - ‘He is offered because He Himself willed it;’ the precious Offering was made because she also willed it, otherwise, something would have been wanting in the manner of the Sacrifice; something, which the Eternal Father Himself required of her. Her permission had been asked once before, when it was the question whether she would offer her Maternity to give Jesus His Sacred Humanity. It was fitting, then, that when His Life should be sacrificed, she too should unite her consent with that of her Divine Son - and this is expressed in Rhythm 95, stanzas vi and vii.

In the second place it is an act of union between the Eternal Father - whose was the Offering of Divine Paternity, and the Mother - whose was the offering of human maternity. The Divine Nature alone could render condign satisfaction to Divine Justice; but the Sacred Humanity alone, could suffer condignly for the guilt of the creature; and this was the Offering of Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

The following Rhythms (97 - 114) represent the scenes and circumstances of the Passion as witnessed, or shared in spirit, by our Lady. In vision she is with her Divine Son in Limbo; and on awakening from her trance, it is granted her to behold Him in His glorified Humanity in the privacy of her chamber. (Rhythm 115)

With her Assumption concludes the Second Part of the Poem.

With the Third Part commences the contemplation of the Kingdom (Rhythm 125), the glory of the Court of Heaven, and the Vision of the Blessed; and this is followed by the formation and triumph of the Church, even in the midst of persecution, and the continued warfare between good and evil. The gradual development of the personal action of our Lady in the affairs I of the Church Militant, and the acknowledgment of her Queenship in the councils of the Church, are touched upon in Rhythms 133 - 140. The

worship of the Church is then contrasted with idolatrous worship, in Rhythm 138.

Among the remainder of the Rhythms will be found several paraphrases, beginning with Rhythms 140 and 141, which are taken from Holy Scripture: then follow others taken from Saint Basil of Seleucia and Saint Epiphanius, in Rhythm 144, from Saint Cyril of Alexandria, in Rhythm 147, and from Saint Ambrose de Virginibus, in Rhythm 148.

Thus, it may be seen, that the doctrines contained in the Poem are sustained throughout by the words and devotions of both the early and the later Fathers of the Church, by the testimony of Saints and Doctors, and above all by the explicit teaching of the Catholic Church in the Missal and Breviary, as the exponent of Sacred Scripture.

I have endeavoured in all simplicity to develop the mind of the Church, without adding anything beyond that which can be traced to an imagination of my own. The boldest imagination, however, pales in the presence of such witnesses as these. What light is that which our poor degenerate souls are capable of bearing, in comparison with that which blazed in theirs? And that Light even, what was it, when we think of the Light in which Jesus Himself reigns with His Virgin Mother by His side?

* * *

I would now add a few words about the origin of this Poem, in order to show that it is not the outcome of a number of detached thoughts, or even of contemplations made at various times and under different impressions of the soul. It is, in fact, but one continuous contemplation from beginning to end.

In the year 1890, I was seeking on the banks of the Rhine a solitude, in the midst of a devout Catholic population, in order to spend the conclusion of my life in quiet devotion.

A request from the editor of a Catholic Magazine that I should supply him with some few sketches of the miraculous Shrines of our Lady, appeared to give substance and aim to my life: on expressing which thought by letter to

a priest in England, it was suggested by him that there was wanted what he called ‘a history - not a life - of our Blessed Lady.’ He could not explain himself more distinctly: but I saw plainly that his idea, unknown to himself, was a mystical one. These two things together helped me to act. I had a singular devotion to the Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Lady, of which, however, at that time I had but a crude realization; and this determined me to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of the ‘Immaculately conceived One’ of Hardenberg - now Neviges, near Elbersfeld - in order to seek the graces necessary, should it be her will that I should do the work which I was told was wanting. This Sanctuary of Divine Graces, which, as far as I know, was the only one in existence before the definition of the Church on the Immaculate Conception of our Lady, took its origin miraculously in the year 1681.

My next step was to write to Pustet, the publisher, in Ratisbon, requesting him, for love of our Lady, to supply me with a copy of his ‘Marianum,’ which he generously gave me for the purpose I had in view; and then I began to write, for my own instruction, certain sketches of our Blessed Lady under the mystic characters ascribed to her in Sacred Scripture, or by the Church, out of all which studies I drew the conclusion, as a simple act of my reason, that ft very special and eminent devotion was due to the unparalleled dignity of her Vocation.

During this time, which was just before the centenary of Saint Bernard, I was asked to contribute to a collection of sketches in honour of the Saint; and from the list sent to me, I chose that of ‘Saint Bernard and our Lady.’ I then got together what I could of authorized translations of Saint Bernard’s Sermons and Homilies; and I framed my sketch according to the light I was gradually receiving on the subject of the Immaculate Conception; and I pointed out that Saint Bernard could not have come, as he did, to the conclusion of our Lady’s Excellence, without unconsciously admitting that the ‘singular’ Grace which he owns to have been granted her, was that of the Sinlessness belonging to human nature as it had left the Hands of the Creator. The sketch was accepted with thanks: but the plan collapsed; and I was then requested to leave the manuscript in the hands of those for whom it had been written.

It was thus that the living picture of our Lady grew more and more vividly before me; but as yet, I did not see my way to the ‘History.’ I was also watching the spirit of the people amongst whom I dwelt, and gauging for myself its purity; for, from the age of twenty-four I had heard the popular devotion in Catholic countries called ‘Mariolatry’ - which expression had always offended my sense of justice. This spirit I found to be so simple, so unaffected, so loyal to the Blessed Mother of Jesus Christ, that the more I observed, the more convinced I became that our Lady was personally working in the Militant Church, and keeping devotion alive in the midst of an unbelieving and agnostic age. I had seen this same thing in the three places abroad in which I had lived; in one of which I had passed two years in absolute solitude - thus I had become acquainted with the religion of the people in each.

In 1893, I was apparently settled for good at a village bordering the right bank of the Rhine, called Winkel - a great centre of the Faith in the days of Charlemagne - when the time arrived for me to write the History of our Lady; and when, I may say, the inspiration came. It was on the 3rd of January, 1894, that I began this labour of love - for such it was - and I wrote continuously until April 21st. Each morning as it came unfolded the picture as I went on. I was simply painting the beauty of a glorious creation, as I conceived it by my spiritual eye, far more plainly than I could see any visible object with my physical eye. Every Rhythm stands in the original place it first occupied; and every thought exists as it was then developed. I did not appear to be the originator, but only the agent of the work. I had no cause to reason on the subject; nor did I choose the colours of the palette. All was there ready to my hand; and as it was produced then, so does it appear now.

* * *

A few last words may be added, to explain the use of a metre which is open to criticism, being novel, and apparently monotonous.

It was in the year 1876 that, under a kind of pious inspiration, I wrote in this metre the prayer, ‘To Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.’ At the end of that year, I had occasion to seek the acquaintance of the late Rev. Dr. Rawes, of the Oblates of Saint Charles, in connection with the Association of Prayer

which led to the establishment of the Confraternity of the Servants of the Holy Ghost. My object being a spiritual one, I sent him, as an introduction, a spiritual voucher of myself. It was this prayer that was the first step to our union in that work.

One day, speaking of the poem to me, Dr. Rawes said: ‘But what made you write in Iambics.’ My very simple reply was: ‘Do you call this metre by that name?’ He laughed and said: ‘You remind me of the “bourgeois-gentilhomme” of Moliere, who was surprised to find he had been speaking in prose all his life. Yes; I like your verses very much.’

Later on, I wrote my ‘Canticle to the Holy Ghost’ in the same metre, and with the same manner of concluding the lines. This canticle was much liked by those, in the young Association, who made use of it. At the same time, or soon after, the ‘Canticle of Saint Bernard’ was put into my hands to translate and to versify, and I found the metre specially manageable for elevated thought, whether of prayer or of contemplation. I am under the impression that in this manner of poetical composition I have been original; though there is no special merit in it beyond the fact, that it suits certain forms of spiritual - may I say of mystical? - thought, which require absolute freedom for their expression.

In 1894, when about to begin this present work, I found naturally that I must replace the repetition of the same word-ending in every line of each stanza - the plan largely adopted in the ‘Canticle to the Sacred Limbs of Jesus’ - by the repetition of the same rhyme, and thus ensure an ending which should fall on the ear in rhythmical cadence, instead of appealing only, or mainly, to the eye. This course seemed to me to be necessary, seeing that the charm of the work would depend on its being a faithful rendering of the mystical teaching contained in it, and not on the beauty or attractiveness of its poetic form. At the same time I found, as I proceeded, that the form itself was capable of great beauty - in words and elevation of language; and could be equally effective in a simple invocation, or in colloquy, or in contemplation, as when describing those sublime truths connected with our Blessed Lady’s personality, when united with the sufferings of the God-Man upon the Cross - in addition to which, I found that I could follow, by its means, the inspired poetry of Holy Scripture.

I now believe that the musical Rhythms of the Iambic form, and flow of the sentences make up, in a great measure, for the apparent monotony of construction, and that the deep and high subjects treated in the ‘Perfect Woman’ will be more appreciated, and even better understood, by being unembellished by art.

I commit the cause of the ‘Perfect Woman’ to the love of the devout Reader, and humbly hope that critics will, for the reasons given, be merciful towards the many literary faults which I have no doubt will be found in the pages of this book.

- *Emily Mary Shapcote*
- *Beaumont, Haute Savoie*
- *Feast of the Epiphany, 1902*

Part One: The Incarnation and the Immaculate Conception

Rhythms I - LXVII

The Incarnation - Condign Satisfaction - Cause of the Flight - Flight into Egypt - Egypt - Nazareth - Limbo

Perfecta Mea

Mary of God, what Attributes sublime
This word reveals, God's Perfect Work in time;
His glorious Thought untarnished: His Alone -
'Columba Mea' - embracing all that lies
Within the reach of human sympathies.

Oh, Mystery of Holiness, in thee -
Immaculate Fair Vision - we may see
His New Creation's inwrought Entity,
His Church, His Undented, His Perfect One -
Like an Aurora stepping out of night,
Clothed with the Sun and flowing with Delight.

Argument of Part One

The First Part of this Poem treats of the Immaculate Conception. Under this title is included all the known Mysteries of our Lady's Mystic Life and Being, anterior to the Ministry of our Lord. It is divided into seven sections:

1. The Incarnation
2. Condign Satisfaction
3. Cause of the Flight
4. Flight into Egypt
5. Egypt
6. Nazareth
7. Limbo

In Section one the contemplation of the glory of her unrivalled position in the Kingdom of Grace, prepares the mind to view our Lady as the Second Mother of Mankind, to comprehend the Angelic Message; and to realise the Hypostatic Union of the Divine with the Human Nature, in the Bosom of Mary. The mind dwells lovingly on the considerations which this Mystery involves - especially on the close personal relationship which it brought about between the Mother of Jesus and the Son of God: and the splendour of these relationships opens to it glories which naturally and supernaturally would belong to one prepared, as she had been, to be the means of bringing God upon earth, and of raising up man to Heaven.

Section two opens the picture of Condign Satisfaction in the mystery of the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple. In this section we consider our Lady as the human Giver of that Ransom which alone was condign with the guilt of the Fall: we touch also on the subject of 'Dual-unity,' so as to give the key-note to a grand principle in creation, much dwelt upon in this poem. This principle takes its source from the greatest of all Mysteries; viz. the Hypostatic Union of the Natures of God and man - of the Uncreated with the created.

The third Section develops the origin of sin and the beginning of the conflict between Good and Evil. The conception of sin through the hearing

of Eve is shown to be the work of Satan acting with her consent. Sin, in the first place, had been generated by a rebellion of the spiritual creation; and now it is infused into man's double nature of flesh and spirit. The condign punishment assigned to the three guilty ones, together with the prospect of redemption through the Seed of a Perfect Woman, are the grounds of Satan's undying hate, the design he forms of persecuting the human race, and of hindering the gracious designs of God concerning it.

Section four presents the probable incidents, received traditionally, of the Flight into Egypt. We are led to contemplate the perfect union of Will in the Souls of Jesus and of Mary, and to consider the power of Intercession with God.

Section five - In Egypt we contemplate the future cradle of the Early Church, and we call to mind the wonderful visions of the Sibyls (the consecrated virgins of heathen worship) concerning the Blessed Virgin and her Divine Offspring.

Section six contemplates the Hidden Life at Nazareth and carries us to the Death of Saint Joseph.

Section seven treats of the reception of Saint Joseph in Limbo; his message to the Fathers; Eve's protracted desolation, and her consolation, on hearing of the Immaculate Conception of her Daughter, Mary.

Prologue to Part One

I sing the Song of Songs, the Song of Love,
Which Angels clad in glory may not sing.
I sing the Inconceivable conceived,
The Uncreated Majesty of God
Cradling Himself upon the lap of Time,
A Creature -

In that Vision I adore
The Eye Omnipotent, Omniscience
Gazing upon the Sweetness and the Worth
Of one most Beautiful Conception.

He
Who in the Form of Humankind would be
Received into creation, then beheld,
When worlds were not, the Gracious Entity
Of her whom He ordained His Own to make
Above all other creatures - Fair without;
Glorious within; saved from a shipwrecked race;
And graciously conceived in Justice.

Then
The Faultless Image of Himself He viewed,
And loved supremely from Eternity.

* * * * *

He, who was about to redeem the Human Race, brought with Him into Mary, and bestowed upon her, the whole Ransom. Why was this? Haply, that excuse might be made for Eve through her Daughter, and that the complaint of the man against the woman might henceforth be hushed to sleep for ever. Say now no longer, O Adam, 'The woman whom Thou gavest me, gave me of the forbidden tree.' Say rather, 'The Woman whom Thou gavest me has fed me with the Fruit of Benediction.'

- Saint Bernard: Sermon on the Nativity of our Lady

Invocation

Dear Mother of my God, I come to thee;
Mother of my Creator, look on me;
In sorrow and in tears I turn to thee;
Oh, let thy sweet compassion reach to me,
And all my boldness do thou pardon me.

Mother of Fairest Love, unweariedly
Thy heart hath sought thy daughter, silently;
And all through life that heart mysteriously
Hath drawn mine untamed spirit unto thee,
Until the day-dawn brake and rose on me.

At length thou earnest, Mother, unto me,
When heresy had loosed its hold on me,
And with sweet force thy secret sympathy
My restless soul did draw so wond'rously,
That all my being, Mother, clung to thee.

And now my day is done, I come to thee;
The remnant of my life I give to thee;
All else hath vanished; none remains but thee;
All others weary. Naught is there in me,
For I am nothing; yet I hope in thee.

Oh yes, I hope that surely thou wilt be
Mine Advocate with Him who calleth thee
The Mother of His Love: and utterly,
Sweet Mother, do I trust thy love for me
Who hast, for His dear sake, remembered me.

Then teach my failing voice to sing of thee;
Let my last music ring in praise of thee;
Let these last humble rhymes be full of thee

That, swan-like, this my latest song may be
A sweet and mystic melody to thee.

Then, while I sing this lowly hymn to thee,
Cleanse thou my thoughts, that they may worthily
Express the wonders of that Mystery,
By which our fallen Nature claims to be
United to the Eternal Word, through thee.

The Second Eve

O Woman, greatly blest, all praise to thee
Whom Seers foretold, and Saints in ecstasy
Have seen in light enthroned; behold, on high
Thou sittest, Lady, in thy majesty;
And I, in untaught accents, sing of thee.

Most Valiant thou of women, made to be
The Mother of the new-born Race; oh, see,
To the sweet depths of thy humility
Hath God descended, and created thee
Mother and Queen of His Humanity.

It was the crown of this great grace that He,
God's Holy Spirit, overshadowed thee;
More than the vows of thy Virginity,
Than the resignment of Maternity,
Was the great strength of thy humility.

Oh, why art thou so fair? Why willeth He,
O Blessed Virgin, thus thy Spouse to be?
Why, but because He had forechosen thee
Before the worlds, His Own, such-wise to be
That thou with Him our Ransomer shouldst be.

Rejoice, O Father Adam; this is she
Who pleads with God, who chosen is to be
The Mother of the Saviour. Joyously
Sing, Mother Eve, nor inconsolably
Weep for the wrong committed 'neath the tree.

Lo, she is come thy place to take, to be
A Second Mother to Humanity:
Mary will satisfaction find for thee;

For as by woman man hath fallen, he
By Woman shall be lifted, righteously.

Did Eve bring death? By Mary life shall be;
The baffled dragon shall, tormented, flee;
By Man and Woman vanquished, lo, is he;
Through Eve the curse was merited; but see,
Mary hath merited to set us free.

The Hierarchy

Fair Daughter of Divine Paternity;
Unstained Creation of the Trinity;
Rarest of flowers of our humanity;
Sweet Virgin Blossom of maternity;
Great Mother of our Hope - I worship thee.

Plunged through the Ævas of Eternity,
In the Conception of Divinity,
Lo, the great Love of God enfolded thee:
And Wisdom's Word-creative moulded thee,
A Fount perennial of His Grace to be.

Before all worlds created named He thee,
His chosen Mother from eternity;
As to a Daughter fond unceasingly
His perfect ways lay open unto thee;
And thine, reflecting His, played wondrously.

Eternal Wisdom stooped to counsel thee,
And thou wert one with Him, and He with thee
All was included in this Mystery:
Creation was subordinate to thee;
Thou wert His only One: He dwelt with thee.

Oh, wondrous union that was formed with thee;
Creator and the Creature joined in thee;
In God's eternal Present, thou wert she,
His Blessed Mother; through Eternity,
Past, present and for aye, He honours thee.

In His Conception truly wouldst thou be
Immaculate and lovely: it was He
Who gave His grand Conception birth in thee,

That thou of Eve the unfallen Child shouldst be
And her great Advocate - oh, Mystery.

The Father's Gift is thy Maternity:
His Wisdom all His Glory sheds on thee:
The Paraclete His Title shares with thee,
That thou the Daughter, Mother, Spouse, mayst be
'Twixt God and Man, a perfect Hierarchy.

The World's Salvation

Thou Lily of angelic purity,
Thou Violet of sweet humility,
Thou blushing Rose of Virgin modesty,
Thou golden Blossom from the Royal Tree,
Whose Fruit, Divine and Human, grew on thee.

Conceived Immaculate, oh, thou shouldst be
The sovereign Spring of reborn purity;
The Pearl of man's new found integrity;
The eastern Gate through which God seeks to be
Admitted to our lost humanity.

Alone, alone of creatures couldst thou be
The World's Salvation; lo, the Mystery -
Him would thy word conceive, whose Word in thee
Possessed thy soul; and then, possessed with thee
That human Flesh prepared by Him in thee.

Mother of Life, of Beauty, Majesty,
Star of our morning, shining on our sea,
Mystical Heaven, bearing Divinity,
Sun-clothed and Sun-begetting - see,
Wonder of wonders, Mother of God is she.

Hail, Woman, clad in light so gloriously:
Hail, Fount pellucid from the One in Three:
Stronghold of Indefectibility:
Virgin renowned, all hail, we honour thee,
Since thou by God art honoured; praise to thee.

Best Gift of God to man - His partner she;
Best Gift of God to woman - she will be
Their Model and their Mistress. May she see

In them 'the travail of her soul' and be
In them, above all blessed, eternally.

Ye angels, sing for joy: triumphantly
Let human nature sing - yea, cheerily:
Ye devils, fear and tremble; let them flee
Before her step victorious. This is she,
The Woman, who Eve's Advocate will be.

Annunciation

Mother of Fortitude, whose name shall be
High above women blest, look up and see
Thine Angel present on his embassy.
Lo, in the very Power of God comes he -
Strength to the Strong, might unto Majesty.

Holiest of Women, Mother, thou art free
From the dire curse of Eve's maternity;
Drawn by the potent cords of Purity
Hast thou desired and held Virginity,
Nor feared the scandal of sterility.

With flesh untainted and a spirit free
From baser yearnings of humanity,
Fairest of Women, thou wert found to be
Strong in thy Virginal timidity,
Strong in thy purpose God's own Spouse to be.

To Him resigning thy Maternity,
To Him entrusting thy Virginity,
Him hast thou chosen: now He chooseth thee;
And gained hast thou through thine integrity
The Crown of Virginal Maternity.

Thy Name as sweetest Oil poured forth will be;
Earth's fairest maidens will run after thee;
And all through time thy dwelling-place shall be
Among the vineyards, where thy Love will be
Seeking for wine and summer fruits, with thee.

Woman arise, the Eternal looks to thee;
The winter of earth's dreariness must flee.
Spring time is coming. He is calling thee.

'Thy Handmaid, Lord, behold. I answer Thee.
As Thou hast spoken, Be it done - to me.'

The flowers upspring; the day dawns cheerily;
The clouds disperse - night's darkling shadows flee:
The fig-tree putteth forth her leaves; for see,
Beneath her shade reclining, lo, is He,
Whose Shade was her's from all eternity.

Visitation

Mother of Charity divine, in thee,
The first of all our race, triumphantly
Shone Love in Beauty. See, from Galilee
God-bearing, thou didst rise with haste to free
An unborn Soul from sin's malignity.

Vision unrivalled: babes unborn we see
Each knowing other: Women called to be
The mouthpiece of the gracious Trinity:
Yea, Women, bearing each a Mystery
In which lay hidden man's high destiny.

In that same hour of high mysterious glee
When the Precursor leapt his Lord to see:
And rapt Elizabeth embracing thee,
Proclaimed thee Mother of her Lord - were we
Unborn, and unbegotten, blest through thee.

Through all the ages dropping silently
Thy faith, O Mother, reacheth out: and we,
All graces and all blessings owe to thee.
Thy voice, O Mother, pleadeth tenderly,
For us thy Children. Glory be to thee.

Oh, heavenly Voice of music, made to be
A conduit of divine benignity;
An utterance of eternal charity;
O Voice, that never spake in vain, when He
Should answer make whose Manhood came from thee.

Dear Voice of Mary - Come, O Day, when we
May hearken to its music. May it be
Still uttered for our pleading: utterly,

Oh, utterly thy children hang on thee,
And seek thy gentle suffrage, pleadingly.

Magnificat; Magnificat. Ah, we
Will sing thy hymn and daily learn from thee
The lesson of thy deep humility.
From out our deep hath God exalted thee,
O Woman ever Blessed. Praise to thee.

The Navitity

Mother of Jesus newly born; to me
Reach forth her accents full melodiously;
List to her tender breathings; though they be
In secret whispered, yet mysteriously
Bear trophies of this speechless Mystery.

'O my Beloved, how is it to me
That I, Thy Handmaid, should Thy Mother be?
That I, Thy lowly One, should give to Thee
The Infant beauty that now greeteth me
With tears and smiles? O sweet Humanity.

'Lo, Thy Divinity I serve in Thee,
Yet Mother am of all I see in Thee,
Whose tender weakness doth depend on me:
How dare I ope the fount of milk to Thee
Who feedest all in Thy benignity.

'A Little One Thou art; but lo, in Thee
I see contained Divine Immensity:
In weakness circumscribed, behold I Thee
While all creation draws its strength from Thee.
Thy Mother am I, Lord, Who madest me.

'How shall I name Thee, Little One? I see
Mine Offspring and my Counterpart in Thee:
My Babe, my Babe - I gave Thy Flesh to Thee,
And I may call Thee mine: yet fear to be
Presuming with Thy dread Divinity.

'God's Son art Thou; humbly adore I Thee:
My Offspring Thou - Thou lookest up to me:
Oh, how I long to kiss and fondle Thee:

But Thou art God; and when I gaze on Thee
I fear to touch such endless Majesty.

'Oh, shine, Thou Light - Light that art sprung from me.
Exult Jerusalem: for thou shalt see
Him whom the prophets have foretold. Lo, He
This Child of mine, this Child of poverty,
This King of Kings, shall come and reign in thee.'

Colloquy Between Jesus and Mary

Thou Queen of Sacramental Mystery,
On whose dear lap God's Majesty doth lie
Creating all things: He Himself, through thee,
A Creature, sleeping on a Mother's knee -
O wondrous Virgin Mother, praise to thee.

Lo, at thy feet, O Mary, would I be,
That lessons wondrous I might learn from thee,
Lulling thy God with gentle lullaby.
Lo, in thy vision clear all prophecy
Meets its fulfillment on thy gracious knee.

Fountain of Gardens, lo, in thee I see
The Well of Living Waters which shall be
From Libanus a mighty stream, and we
Therein shall bathe and drink and cleansed be:
Fountain of Health, O Virgin, praise to thee.

The Soul of Jesus sleeping wakes for thee;
Thine inward voice He knows, thy lullaby:
Unto thy heart He speaks; 'twixt Him and thee
Are uttered things unspoken. Lo, for thee
No law is made that veils His Face from thee.

Thus mayst thou hear Him answering inwardly:
'I come into My Garden, for in thee
My myrrh and spices grow most readily;
My Garden art thou, and enclosed for Me,
For Me alone; so have I come to thee.

'Until the day dawn and the shadows flee,
A Mountain thou of frankincense shall be;
A Garden and a Resting Place for Me:

Sweet are thy plants, a paradise they be:
O My Beloved, lo, I dwell with thee.'

Her soul enraptured crieth secretly:
'All you who do desire Him, come to me;
Yea come, be filled with my Fruit, that ye
Partakers of His plenteousness may be;
Since Everlasting Life is found with me.'

Coming In of the Gentiles

Daughter of Sion, lift thine eyes and see
The Gentiles bow before thy God and thee:
From east will come thy Sons to honour thee;
And sea-girt isles a-west shall call on thee;
With joy and singing men will draw to thee.

Gold and frankincense, lo, they offer thee;
Spikenard and myrrh and ointments are for thee:
The Dawn, the Day-break art thou; comes from thee
The Sun when He ariseth; Kings shall be
Present at His awaking, round thy knee.

Mother of God, earth's Crown of Majesty:
Jerusalem the Golden, blest is he
Who may explain this Heaven-born Mystery:
Lo, as I kneel, in contemplating thee
I drink the living draught thou reachest me.

Mother of Life, the lifeless turn to thee;
Mother of Health, a Healer thou shalt be;
A multitude of camels draw to thee,
Bearing the riches of the western sea:
With joy and singing, lo, men flow to thee.

Mother of dread Compassion, chosen to be
The Victim-bearer for Humanity:
Myrrh droppeth from thy fingers; thou wilt be
The Priestess at the Sacrifice, when He,
The World's Oblation, hangs upon the Tree.

O Vision in that hour of ecstasy,
The whole sad world is waiting upon thee:
They come from far to greet the Majesty

New-born upon thy lap; and thou wilt be
Their Mother and their Queen. All praise to thee.

Forecast of that loved Church that is to be,
That has been ever - now new-formed in thee;
Jerusalem in Mary reigns: and see,
The Mother and the Priestess silently
Her Babe in expiation gives, for thee.

Mary Foreshadowed

Queen of Redemption, watching silently
The sleeping Infant, swathed upon thy knee:
Thee, Woman born to change man's destiny,
To rise victorious o'er his enemy,
Have types proclaimed through all earth's history.

The Second Eve art thou, ordained to be
Mistress of Life and Immortality:
The First beguiled and overcome was she
Whose ear betrayed the race to slavery,
While thine, O Faithful Virgin, set it free.

The encamped hosts of Canaan were for thee
The forecast of Satanic tyranny:
Lo, the victorious Jael shadowed thee,
When, in the might of faith, all stealthily
She struck the nail and slew the enemy.

The Syrian King, the Lord of Nineveh,
Sending his armies into Galilee
With impious oath, finds naught but infamy:
Lo, Holofernes yields his head to thee,
Most valiant Judith, clothed with chastity.

And what of Esther? Highly favoured she,
Raised to the summit of earth's dignity,
Who meekly prayed and fasted, so that she
The saviour of a people doomed might be -
The winner of her Lord's high clemency.

Forerunners were they of thy dignity:
The Virgin saves the virgin's destiny:
By fortitude she slays the enemy:

His head by Woman's foot is crushed; yea, see,
With God the Woman pleads, and we are free.

O Woman blest beyond all women, we
Rejoice and sing for this our Lord's decree
Who gave to woman such high dignity:
Strong in thy strength, O Virgin, may we be
Under thy banner led to victory.

The Crystal

Mother of God, behold what majesty
That title crowns, what dread sublimity;
What depths unfathomable lie in thee;
Yea, saints have looked therein, nor failed to see,
A greatness bordering on infinity.

O Sacred Virgin, whose humility
Proclaimed the distance between God and thee,
Since thou art God's Own Mother, naught may be
Nearer to Him. Good Infinite is He,
And He His endless Goodness shares with thee.

Mother of God, thou liest in a sea
Of boundless glory: who may a crystal see
Reflecting sun-rays, and not dazzled be?
And though the crystal may be naught, yet we
Believe no less its fire-born purity.

Thou art the Sun-born Crystal, and from thee
Proceeds the Ray that, Sun-born, dwelt in thee;
The only perfect Crystal that could be
Unmolten by the Ray that entered thee -
The Ray, whose Substance joined, yea, lived by thee.

Thy substance entered into Deity,
And Deity itself partook of thee:
Without confusion joined, He linked in thee
His Being with thy nature - mystery
Bordering on consubstantiality.

The Tree of Life thou wert: oh, verily
Blossomed the Flower of Life and grew in thee;
It took from thee thy substance, and to thee

Was rendered back, to grace the parent tree,
The Fruit Divine of Immortality.

Thou gavest God a Mother: it was He
Who gave to thee a Son - a Son to be
The Type of Sonship; so He honoured thee.
The Type of Motherhood, obediently -
This was the Crown of thy Maternity.

The Dewdrop

Clothed with the Sun, a Woman, lo, we see,
Receptacle of unborn Entity;
The Burning Bush, yet unconsumed is she;
The Vessel of God's awful Purity,
Mirror of Indestructibility.

High wert thou throned from all eternity,
Yet higher clombest through integrity;
The Sunshine sought and rested still on thee
And drew thee heavenward to Himself, to be
The Ray-begetting: glory be to thee.

Thou wert the Dewdrop resting lowlily
Upon the Flower of our Humanity;
The Sunshine found and penetrated thee
'Till all His hues refracted were in thee;
Then placed thee in the cloud, our Rain to be.

Rain down, O Fair One; let the Just One be
Thy gift in tears to our humanity;
Rain down the drops the Sunshine found in thee;
And of the countless graces poured on thee,
Oh, rain on us the dew of purity.

Open, O Earth; one spot of thine is free
From the dire curse of man's deformity:
Open and give; thy Maker calleth thee
To render back in its integrity
The faultless Creature that lies hid in thee.

Rise up, O Fair One, earth is not for thee;
For thee no law exists to hinder thee
From entering His Presence valiantly:

Thou art His Firstborn, and He loveth thee;
Thou art His Pure Conception; hail, to thee.

Mount up, mount up, time presses; thou must be
Ere long the partner of His Majesty;
Thou Giver of His sweet Humanity;
Thou Shadow of His sacred Infancy;
Thou Mother of His Sorrows - hail, to thee.

The Rainbow

Arch of the Heavenly Spheres; the cloud shall be,
However dark, a resting place for thee;
Thus, where life's raindrops fall most heavily,
Art thou, O Mother, shining o'er the sea
Whilst we are toiling onwards wearily.

God shines on us through tears: we look to thee
And count His very rays which break in thee;
We dare not lift our eyes our Sun to see
Whose dazzling splendour needs some Veil, to be
Approached by us in our infirmity.

He veils His splendour in the cloud, that we
May gather up His promises in thee;
And as on it we bend our gaze, we see
His graces all reflected beauteously
In sevenfold glory, as they rest on thee.

Thou Rainbow of our dark humanity,
Exemplar beauteous of the One in Three,
Whose sevenfold Gifts are found to be in thee,
Whose every Grace doth blend harmoniously,
Each heightening the other, endlessly.

Light, uniform, declares the Unity;
Light, three in one, reveals the Trinity;
And from this threefold oneness, lo, we see
The Love of God reflected gloriously
In seven bright Rays, which find their home in thee.

Rainbow of our sad lives, we hope in thee,
For hope was given to them who look to thee.
Mother of Hope art thou; for where we be

There looms the thunder-cloud, and yet we see
God's Love therein, so long as we have thee.

Promise of God, Who lives and shines in thee;
Who may forget His wondrous Clemency?
Who but adore such Love as points to thee,
That made thee what thou art, so thou shouldst be
The Rainbow of His great Benignity?

The Circumcision

Mother of Love undying, lo, we see
The New-named Infant resting on thy knee,
Whose Name is Jesus from all eternity:
Oh, may that Name of Jesus hallowed be,
And blended with thine own unendingly.

Mary, sweet Mother, Jesus looks to thee
In this first hour of suffering, which might be
The Ransom of a Universe: but He,
The Saviour of His people, verily,
For them will shed His Heart's Blood lavishly.

Jesus and Mary: oh, unceasingly
Do we their Names entwine - so they may be
Our Amulet 'mid earthly misery.
Jesus and Mary: 'twine we trustingly
When lone, heart-broken, and bereft we be.

Jesus and Mary: should, benignantly,
Life smile upon us, oh, vouchsafe to be
The Guardians of our short prosperity.
With childlike confidence invoked, oh, ye
The cup will bless, nor let it poisoned be.

Jesus and Mary: when in doubt we be,
Or in temptation's hour to you we flee,
Safe from the snares of Satan we shall be.
Mary, oh, guide us o'er this restless sea:
Jesus, oh, save us in extremity.

O Jesus, Child of Mary, born to be
Our Portion here, our Joy eternally:
Keep us from danger when we cry to thee.

And thou, O Mary, pray unceasingly,
And be our Life-boat on this surging sea.

When the dread hour approacheth stealthily,
And all life's work is ended, so that we
Await in fear and trembling God's decree -
Jesus and Mary, take us tenderly:
By those dear Names invoked, oh, set us free.

The Ransom

Eaglet of singular begetting, see
The eyrie God Himself hath made for thee,
High in mid-heaven thy dwelling place shall be
Whose Eye into His Glory looks, to see
And learn His Will who overshadows thee.

And now hath risen thy Sun, and thou canst see
Him shining through that sweet Humanity;
Though veiled in Flesh, yet veiled not to thee -
Who shar'st with Him the unspoken Mystery -
A Godhead clothed in Sacred Infancy.

Him hast thou compassed, Woman: verily,
Since Godhead all entire was found in thee,
So Manhood was in perfect entity.
This did the Seer foretell: and thou art she
Forechosen to fulfil the Mystery.

Now must thou quit thy still retreat, to be
The Bearer of the God who beareth thee;
The Enfolder of a Child who foldeth thee:
Long is the way, and Joseph anxiously
The bridle holds of that which carrieth thee.

She, who the sun exceeds in purity,
Seeks by obedience purer still to be:
She, who of worlds the Ransom bears, will be
The Ransomer of Him who owneth thee,
With tokens of His wondrous poverty.

Slowly and silently the Blessed Three
Move onward at the call of God's decree;
While rapt in holy contemplation, she

Adores the Infant in her arms; and He
Speaks to her soul in answer - speechlessly.

O Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Holy Three,
On earth the figure of the Trinity:
Great are ye in your lowliness; for see,
To God ye bring a Price as great as He,
Condign with God's offended Majesty.

The New Thing: No. I

O Sacred Virgin, wondrous Mystery
Is this New Thing that hath been found in thee:
Let it not be forgotten: carefully,
And with becoming reverence, let us see
The meaning of this New-found Thing in thee.

Oh, that with purer lips I might of thee,
Great Virgin Mother, speak more worthily.
Lo, of thy condescension deign to be
The true Inspirer of my thoughts of thee,
Whilst I with fear am contemplating thee.

Chosen thou hast been from eternity
To be the Healer of Humanity:
When man had fallen away so deep, that he
With eye all bleared, and ear unstrung must be,
With all he touches, sad deformity.

Nothing in him is sacred, nothing free:
Nothing is stedfast, nothing great. Ah me,
Knowledge of evil all unwittingly
Is his - a knowledge bringing misery
To him, fear, suffering, death; so sick is he.

Conceived, created, in God's Image, he
Had upright been and full of dignity,
Noble and pure and clothed with sanctity;
How hath he lost his first estate: yea, see,
Weak, suffering, helpless, dying; dead is he.

What then is this New Thing? this Mystery,
Mother of God, that we shall find in thee?
Lo, Him, the Perfect Man of prophecy,

His Mother's Bosom holds: and what is He?
Power that is weak; Man-veiled in Infancy.

God, who upholdeth all things, helplessly
Stretching His arms for human sympathy;
Life that is dying, Health that is suffering, see.
Length circumscribed; Breadth that must narrow
Word that God is - a speechless Mystery.

The New Thing: No. II

Jesus, the Man - but veiled. Lo, this is He
Foreshadowed by the Seer in prophecy.
Jesus is He, who in the womb doth lie -
A Man in wisdom and maturity,
In Form of simple, unborn, Entity.

Jesus the Man, in power of Soul, though He
In tenderness of Flesh is bound to be:
With senses ripe, although the limbs may be
Bounded and circumscribed by infancy:
In might a Man, though not in age, is He.

The Word not less was Wisdom's Self when He,
Descended from His Throne, enclosed to be,
And naughten in the womb - Infinity:
Not less than when He slept on Mary's knee,
Or when He questioned Doctors searchingly.

For whether in the womb, or on the knee,
Or weeping through a Babe's fragility,
Or shedding grace on Elders - such was He
By Hypostatic Union bound to be -
In Manhood perfect, as in Majesty.

Why veils He thus His dread Divinity?
Why hides His Soul's perfection? He would be
The Medicine of a sick humanity,
Its Strength in weakness; Health to infirmity,
Comfort in weeping, Hope in extremity.

Such is the New Thing that we find in thee
Accomplished, Mother, in thy Purity:
The Man conceived for man's infirmity

Hath taken man's infirmities - in thee,
Beneath the veils of Sacred Infancy.

Grace is His due: 'twas His eternally.
It overflowed in His Humanity
On thee, for us. On earth He willed to be,
That which He willeth to eternity -
Man in God's Nature: God in our entity.

Saint Joseph

O Sacred Virgin, in Simplicity
With Joseph for thy Guardian, thou dost hie
Whither the Law commands. The passers-by
Thou heedest not: but oh, how willingly
The Temple seekest, as in days gone by.

Then was the Temple, Home. Oh, verily,
The shelter natural and meet for thee.
It was thy Father's House, where solemnly
Presented thou hadst been in infancy;
And there hadst vowed thy bright Virginity.

How long, it seems, ago. And now is she
Once more upon its threshold: she can see
The well-known Gate of Solomon; yet she
Dreams not of former days, but thoughtfully
Proceeds, deep pondering o'er the Mystery.

When last those gates she passed, a Bride was she,
The Bride of Joseph: such was God's decree.
Chaste to the chaste: her robe of Purity,
Heaven-taught he recognised. - 'Be thou to me,'
Said he, 'a Sister; Brother, I to thee.'

For many sought her hand; but only he
Whose staff the Lily bare, was meet to be
The Guardian-witness of that Purity.
His virgin soul, by God, was trained to be
The worthy Sharer of her destiny.

She, who in hiding grew, and secretly
Had found her dwelling in the Rock on high,
Had need of human shelter; so that he

Became the shadow of that Majesty
Beneath whose Shade she dwelt and loved to be.

And Jesus called him 'Father.' Blest was he
And worthy of the honour. He shall be
Henceforth the Father of the Faithful. See,
As Patron of the Church of Christ, doth he
Still serve the Bride with all fidelity.

The Lily and Its Six Virtues

Unsullied Shell, in whose integrity
The priceless hidden Pearl was found to be;
Hail peerless Diadem, in which we see
The Crown of indefectibility,
The Offspring of Eternal Purity.

Mother of Holiness, all hail, to thee,
Fountain pellucid from the One in Three.
Life bearing Fountain, gushing forth from thee
Mankind to quicken with vitality -
Mother of Jesus, hail, all hail, to thee.

The 'Hidden Life' we praise and bless in thee
Whom thou didst draw from Heaven, for us and thee;
Eternal Life, that came and hid in thee,
His chosen Hiding-place on earth, when He
In peace could lead that Hidden Life with thee.

The Pattern of 'Obedience' thou. Through thee
Obedience changed our fallen destiny
God's Will fulfilling, and the just decree
Reversing, of our mortal agony
By disobedience gendered 'neath the tree.

And who may speak of that 'Humility'
Thou sharedst with thy God? who chose to be
The humblest Creature of Humanity?
Him did thy lowliness embrace, when He
Stooped to accept thy 'Holy Poverty.'

Lo, for His 'Reverence' was He heard; and He
In this a counterpart had found in thee.
Thy humble bearing, joined with dignity

Unrivalled, witnessed to the Majesty
Of Him whose Presence overshadowed thee.

For us, a Well art thou of 'Purity,'
Since Purity had made a home in thee.
Lo, thou alone, and first, wert proven to be
In this the Image of thy God - that we
And our defiled nature cleansed might be.

Dual-Unity

Wondrous Conception of the Deity,
O Sunflower of our race; who doth not see
All virtues of our nature shine in thee
In such proportion, that thou needst must be
The Mirror of His sweet Humanity?

Great Mother of the Living, how can we
Thy merit circumscribe? Undoubtedly
Thy bless'd co-operation caused to be
For us a heavenly Parentage; and He
Who took thy Flesh, reversed our doom in thee.

As from the virgin-flesh of Adam, she,
The Woman, without mother, born could be,
Created Type of Dual-unity:
So would the new-formed Type be found to be
The fruit of Virginal Maternity.

Jesus in ail things like to us would be,
Saving for Indefectibility -
His attribute alone. With this would He
Endue thee through His Grace, since thine would be
The Nature that thy Son should take from thee.

Here, on the threshold of the Temple, we
Behold His Human Glories shine in thee:
For not less Human than Divine is He.
That which belonged to His Humanity
Before the world's creation, gave He thee.

Thus speaks the Lily all mysteriously,
Of mystic oneness of thy Babe with thee:
In whose white leaves six Emblems fair we see

Of those rare virtues which, transcendently,
Shone in the Cloud of thy Maternity.

Mother of the Creator; how can we,
Poor weaklings, understand these things of thee?
Thou - the Conception of Divinity;
Thou - the Conceiver of the Deity;
God to thy substance joined, ineffably.

Immaculate Conception

Why seems it hard to understand that she,
Whose graceful Being came from God, should be
A Trophy of Omnipotence? - should be
The Arch-type pure of Human Entity,
By Him restored in lost Humanity?

How do we comprehend the last degree
Of that Life-generating Nature, we,
As the prerogative of time, can see?
How understand in Adam all would be
Of his unheard of, countless progeny?

How, in the first small germ that held the tree,
Myriads on countless myriads would be
Ever, till end of time, unceasingly
Developed each in turn? If this must be
A mystery unfathomed, then are we

Too weak to penetrate that mystery
By which all fell in Adam: yet did we
In Adam fall: and, in the fall, fell she
Who was at her Conception, utterly
From taint through fallen Adam, to be free.

O Sovereign Lord Creator, unto Thee
The whole creation looks; yea, groans to be
From this all-cankering blur in Nature, free.
Alone Thy Word in Human guise can be
Regenerator of Humanity.

That Word it was which set the Mother free
At her Conception: Word, that was to be
By her conceived in sacred Mystery:

Word, which had consecrated dust to be
The fragile Vase of Holy Purity.

His was the Act that this Immunity
Gave to the Dust in Adam's progeny:
He was the Maker: its Refiner, He:
He, its Creator: the Created, she -
Sole Sharer of His Pure Humanity.

The Chalice

Great as thou art, O Virgin, thou dost see
Thyself in God, with all intensity:
His Handmaid only, hast thou sought to be
And as His Handmaid, wilt thou reverently
Perform thyself, with Him, the Lord's decree.

When John and James, His brethren, sought to be
Preferred by Him to some high dignity;
Them asked He simply: Would they dare to be
Partakers of His Cup? and willingly
His burthen bear of dire indignity?

The Chalice marks the honour. Who could be
Than those more worthy of His destiny?
Who bear more bravely each indignity?
But when His hour of triumph cometh, she
Shall sit enthroned by Him in majesty.

Now, 'tis the hour of tribulation. He
Is treading in the winepress. Ruthlessly
Hath clothed Himself with our infirmity,
That, as the Man of Sorrows, He may be
The Lamb of God, slain from eternity.

For our transgressions will He wounded be;
For our chastisement will He bruised be;
And all life-long, the path of suffering He
In patient silence will, unweariedly
Unto its close, tread uncomplainingly.

And when the Lord of Lords came suddenly
Into His Temple, none were there to cry
* Hosannah,' for a simple Babe they see,

Ransomed by Gifts of holy Poverty -
Meet emblems, Mother, of thy Babe and thee.

Yes, 'tis the hour of darkness. Ceaselessly
Rages the conflict with the enemy -
Darkness 'gainst Light. O Woman, this is He,
Thy Babe, who hath the warfare waged; and thee
Hath called to share His Cup - His Victory.

The Sword

Oh, as far off my spirit watcheth thee,
How yearn I, Mother, to run after thee.
The beauty of the nature given to thee -
Though bright with God's own Splendour - tenderly,
Like warmth and light, the sad soul draws to thee.

O Mother, as I sing of days gone by
In lowly rhymes, I feel that thou art nigh:
And in thine ear I whisper, while I sigh.
Forgive me, Mother, poor and weak am I,
Nor blame me for my great temerity.

I see thee as the Creature called to be
The Pattern to all ages: so did He,
The great High-Priest, our substance take from thee,
That being compassed with infirmity,
The Sharer of all suffering He might be.

Mercy was part of His Divinity,
And overflowed His pure Humanity:
For in the School of Suffering learned He
To give our griefs a human sympathy;
And this sweet lesson did He learn with thee.

Mother of pure Compassion, thou wilt be
The first to learn the lesson perfectly:
For while thy joy is brightest, falls on thee
The revelation of a Sword, to be
The piercing of thy heart - His Destiny.

Silent and wond'ring - though the prophecy
Fill thee with awe, 'tis no new thing for thee
To read of woe in store for Him and thee.

The wonder is, though robed in secrecy,
Revealed should be the unspoken mystery.

This word of Simeon bringeth home to thee
The nearness of the Passion. Vividly,
Out from the scenes of ancient prophecy,
Darts forth an arrow, sharp and cruelly.
Lo - Sharer of that Passion thou shalt be.

The Star

The Shadow of the Cross hath fallen on thee,
As opens out thy glorious destiny.
Mother of Dolours art thou, verily,
While all is yet in shadow. Tenderly
Thou takest back thy Babe, thine All, to thee.

* * *

To David's Town, the Sacred Family
Returns; for there, in Joseph's eyes, would be
The fitting home for David's Son, and thee:
When lo, new glories, unexpectedly
Arise to illume Messias' destiny.

For Joseph plans with wisdom, carefully,
The work to him entrusted. He shall be
For these the Providence; which trust, will he -
Conscious of great responsibility -
With God to guide, fulfill unerringly.

'To Juda comes Messias; Galilee
Is of the Gentiles named:' thus reasoneth he,
With human prudence: the while, secretly
Unknown to him, but ever ceaselessly
God guides the movements of His Family.

Arise, Jerusalem, enlightened be:
The Glory of the Lord hath shone on thee;
No mist of darkness shall be found in thee
When, from the distant borders of the sea,
The Kings shall come to show forth praise in thee.

Lift up thine eyes, O Daughter. Look and see
How they of Saba come. Star-lit they be,

Those Kings of Ethiopia. They see
Shining in very splendour over thee
The Star, converting Gentiles unto thee.

Heaven-guided are they here. With holy glee
The house they enter and the God-Babe see
In radiant Infant beauty, on the knee
Of that grave Mother. Lo, adoringly
They fall before them both - in ecstasy.

The Magi

Mystical Heaven, thou Throne of Deity;
Thou Seat of our Redemption; verily,
Alone thou teachest how Infinity
Hath circumscribed Himself, in love, to be
The Ransom of thy people. Praise to thee.

Mother of Life, of Beauty, Majesty;
Mouthpiece of Wisdom; oh, how tenderly
That Word couldst thou decypher, on thy knee;
That Word whose Wisdom from eternity,
To be the world's Joy-giver, called thee.

How do they hang in speechless ecstasy
Upon thy voice, O Mary. Verily,
Aglow is every heart this King to see
Before them, in such lowly Majesty -
And overflows with faith and charity.

From far they come this Mystic Child to see,
To tend the homage of the Isles. And He,
Through the sweet words of Mary, graciously
Reveals the Gospel-tidings, that they be
The bearers of the glad solemnity

Each to his own: yet more. Oh, they will be
Themselves the victims of Love's clemency.
For His dear sake, behold: unwittingly
His Cross they take, since they are called to be
The first fruits of His Love - triumphantly.

In gifts of Gold, as King, they worship Thee,
The token, Lord, of that pure charity
Which overflows the hearts that follow Thee:

And sweet Frankincense pour they forth for Thee,
The Great High-Priest from all eternity.

King, Priest and Victim: lo, revealed they see
Athwart the cloud of this solemnity:
The Sceptre and the Star, alike, for Thee
The nimbus form in ancient prophesy.
Frankincense, Gold and Myrrh they offer Thee.

Creation of Light

Mother of Light, do thou look down on me;
Yea, touch my lips that I may render thee
All reverend homage; and may sing of thee
And Him whose Own thou art. Life's Sun is He,
And in His Light thou shinest. Praise to thee.

Hail, by whom Heaven exults and Devils flee:
Whom Angels praise in choirs, exultantly;
By whom the Tempter is hurled back to be
In chains and darkness everlastingly;
By whom the sinner rises, trustingly.

O Sun-clothed Virgin, thou art, verily,
The Woman promised, between whom should be
And the foul Dragon endless enmity:
And with whose Seed his seed should ruthlessly
Dire warfare wage so long as time should be.

Far back in years primeval, let us see
How darkness rose; and how the mystery
Of sin and disaffection came to be;
How woven with ours that gruesome destiny
Of banished Spirits, till mercy set us free.

* * *

O Light Immortal, Uncreated: be
First imaged in creation. Praised be
The First-born Creature of benignity.
'Light of Intelligence, arise; oh, see
The Face of God and live, eternally.'

The Eternal Word had spoken: 'Let Light be;'
And the Light was. Oh, glorious verity;

Oh, thought supreme, that the Immensity,
The Inconceivable of Entity,
Should in all endless spheres reflected be.

Being was called in Action. Verily,
All beauty reigned in God's Activity,
And strength shone forth in beauty diversely;
While glory, grace and immortality
Flashed into being, simultaneously.

Lost Light

Created Light, O Sun, how gloriously
Thou shinest on our sorrows. Blessed be
Thy rays aslant our clouds, and blessed be
Thy warmth to give us comfort. Wearily
And joyless drags the life that lacketh thee.

But what of Light Internal? What may be
The glory of the spirit that can see
Light Uncreated, and not blinded be.
What of the spiritual Sun? Of thee,
Father of Light, the bright Refulgency.

Ah, if a world deprived of Light must be
Dark, lifeless, beauty-lacking - see,
A thing all writhing in deformity.
What, if a Spirit made for Light should be
No longer full of that Refulgency?

What, if the Light of reason, given to be
The true reflection of Divinity,
Should, through its power of freedom, turn and flee
From that its centre and perfection? See,
Lost then hath Light its own identity.

God's Holy Light no longer claims to be
The Light Angelic: Darkness claims to be
The light of Spirits that have fallen from Thee,
O King of Light and endless Purity -
Whose Light is Life and Immortality.

But then, if Thy created Light should be
Deprived of its created potency;
This power in all ways of reflecting Thee -

If loss of Light be death - then, verily,
Such loss is living death - unendingly.

O Light Angelic, lost for those who be
The partners in rebellion. Dark shall be
Their downward fate. All hope, all charity
With Light must be abandoned. Death must be
The woe in life from which they may not flee.

Sin in Its First Conception

Amid the Ranks Angelic, radiantly
Stands Lucifer - the Morning Star is he;
Towering aloft in peerless majesty,
Gracefully glorious - in that entity
Supreme 'mid things created. Such was he

One moment, when the Light of Purity
Revealed his nature's grand nobility;
The next - and all was lost; so great was he,
None would he serve created - rather be
The foe of his Creator. Such is he.

One instant, and the awful brilliancy
Of inwrought Justice graced, by heaven's decree,
The great Archangel; but the next, was he
Thrust from the gates of glory: nor would he
The Light thus spurned reflect eternally.

Then first fell Night on being - visibly
Was Light from darkness separated: see,
The Vision Beatific is to be
The portion of the faithful; victory
Crowns those before whose arms the faithless flee.

Thus was Sin first conceived. Ah, verily,
Sin entered in with Nature; will was free
To choose or to refuse the destiny
For her ordained; by choice alone could she
Attain beatitude- such God's decree.

Created Light now robed His Throne on high,
And darkness fled: the Angel cannot die,
Nor be annihilate: his death would be

A never-ending dying. Then would he,
As Prince of Darkness, everlastingly

War wage with Him who should the Master be.
His counsels he would foil; unweariedly
Would he God's creatures persecute; would see
No light but he would darken it; and be
God s enemy and man's, eternally.

The Rage of the Heathen

Why do the heathen rage so furiously
Against the Lord and His Anointed? Why
Do potentates with vain malignity
Their un-might wreak on Him, who from on high
Derides in wrath their imbecility?

Whom dare ye thus defy? For know not ye
Before Him nations are but vanity?
And Islands are but dust? Attend and see.
He who the earth's foundation laid, yea, He
Who the world circumscribeth, lo, 'tis He.

Lift up your eyes, O Nations, look and see:
Whose is the might that alt created? See,
The Lord, the Everlasting God is He,
That stretcheth forth His arm unceasingly
The poor to raise, the proud to stultify.

Keep silence, O ye Islands. Turn to Me,
Ye Nations of the east. Draw nigh and see
The Just who hath appeared. The Word is He;
The Alpha: The Omega: I Am He:
The Lord Omnipotent in Majesty.

Give ear, O Islands: hearken unto Me,
And ye who are afar lo, I Am He
Who from the womb am called. My Name shall be
Before our God in Sion. Come to Me.
'I Am Who Am' it is, that calleth ye.

With Strength the Lord is come: His arm shall be
The Ruler of the peoples - yet is He
So meek and gentle that all tenderly

And Shepherd-like He folds the lambs to be
Close to His Bosom - God of Love is He.

He willeth not as God in Majesty
To wreck their great un-might; but He
In weakness will their impotence defy -
In weakness of the Man - and crushed will be
Man's hellish pride, through man's infirmity.

Light and Darkness

The Prince of Darkness, who by God's decree
From Heaven's gate was hurled, that he might be
Reserved for darkness unredeemedly,
Our sunlit world approached, since there should be
The field of his remorseless enmity.

Created beauty, grace and harmony
And faultless generation would he see
In that Divine profusion, endlessly
Fruition working - through all time to be
The faithful witness to Benignity.

Sends forth the Sun the wonder-working Ray:
To gems the dewdrop turns; night turns to day:
It smiles upon the flowers, or stops mid-way
On lofty pine, or on the mountain way,
Or stoops to kiss the babbling brooklet's spray.

O blessed Light - Smile of the Trinity;
O mirrored Witness to the One in Three:
Blessed be the mountain path, the forest tree,
And every drop of dew reflecting thee -
Yet blessed more the heart and eyes that see.

To darkened eye that ever closed must be,
Light streams in vain. There lies no faculty
For beauty, grace, or blended harmony
In form and colour. Darkness to dark will be
The mirror of its own deformity.

But for the Prince of Darkness - darkness he -
What could this life of light and beauty be,
Whose eye itself had lost its clarity?

Had lost that Light to which this light would be
But a bright shadow? Lost, ah, lost is he.

Alone may pride and hate and anarchy
Fill up the measure of his entity.
Can he not reign in Light? Then reign will he
Over the ruins of Humanity -
Over the outcasts from God's Clemency.

Sin in the Flesh

Outlawed and flying, through the dread decree
That closed all avenues to Charity,
Deeper and further doth the Immortal flee
From the Divine Immutability -
Hell in himself creating, endlessly.

Burning with hate and quenchless jealousy,
Man's Paradise of pleasure enters he,
And there descries the Woman. Round the tree
Where she alone is standing, coileth he
His serpent trail. Ah, why alone is she?

The Serpent speaks. Word all-deceitfully
Conceived, enters the Woman's ear; and she
Believing, drinks it in- oh, misery.
The foul conception of the Enemy
In flesh is formed^ when Eve conceives the lie.

Oh, dire conception of deformity,
Quenching the Light of Truth, of Charity,
God's blessed Light to darkness turning. See,
His Image fair defaced. And thou wilt be,
Adam, the death of all thy progeny.

* * *

The vision changes. Culprits though they be,
God cometh in the cool of eve, when He
Before His Face arraigns the guilty three -
Their punishment assigning- even He,
With Justice armed, yet clothed in Clemency.

Ah, death must be their portion, though they be
The best beloved of creatures: nor can He

Grant pardon; but in sad conception, she
Who gendered death, in deathly throes must be;
And both in toil work out their destiny.

Thus then they stand convicted. But will He
This blest conception from eternity
Leave to the malice of the enemy?
Ah, no: for He who judgment gives, is He
Prepared, ere time began, to set them free.

The Serpent's Doom

Lord God Omnipotent, whose blest decree
It was to raise from earth a progeny
Angels excelling, all things wait on Thee:
All worketh out Thy purpose; gracefully
Are all things wrought, from end to end, in Thee,

In vain will Might created, furiously,
O Holy God, mad warfare wage with Thee:
Whom Thy All-might supporteth, surely he
Can laugh to scorn the wily Enemy
And meekly hold his own, undauntedly.

The Serpent's doom is uttered; verily,
A doom condign with his temerity:
Through Woman's weakness, he who thought to be
Avenged on God through all futurity
Himself by Woman's Foot shall vanquished be.

Vainly he writhes; he knows the infamy
In store for one who dares the Lord defy.
A fate inglorious is his destiny.
Not Heaven's great power, not Angel-might will be
The ruin of his deep-planned villany,

But in some subtle way he may not see;
The Seed of Woman who will Woman be
Shall, by her Grace and firm Fidelity,
Him hurl down headlong, and a progeny
In holiness secure: more knows not he.

But times and seasons knowing not, yet he
Will watch his hour of triumph. He will be
Present at that dread Birth. Thus, wilily,

With all his hosts, the Infernal Dragon see
At war with Woman, unrelentingly.

In vain: the Evangelist in ecstasy
Was given the Revelation in which he
Beheld the unfolding of this Mystery:
The Dragon watching for his prey, and she,
The Sun-clothed Woman, crowned with victory.

On the Watch

Now art thou come, O Sun-clothed Mother. Thee
The Eternal Word had promised. Lo, 'tis He
Who lieth in thy lap all tranquilly,
Knowing the heathen rage, that kings decree
His death, with hundreds, in their infancy.

Thou too art tranquil, Mother, though to thee
No secret was withheld of prophecy:
Silence becomes thy state; the grace to see
The hidden working of God's ways with thee
Lies shrouded in thy deep humility.

Thou watchest, weary Mother; yet for thee
Is rest becoming, for thy heart is free.
When lo, the startled Babe upon thy knee
Riseth anon, and mutely clings to thee
As for protection - looking unto thee.

And Joseph entering, notes the prodigy:
The Word Divine confirming, erewhile he
Had heard in slumber. Promptly must they flee
Before the face of Herod, whose decree
The morrow will declare, unpityingly.

Watcheth the Dragon, surely. Knoweth he
The secret of the heavenly Mystery
Enclosed in Virginal Maternity?
Nay; but he spieth ever, and 'tis he
Who drives the King to this impiety.

Hell-hounds be they who, baying furiously,
Are leashed against the Christ; for Devils see
Under this garb of humble poverty

More than King Herod: e'en his turpidy
Needs but the one Archdemon - Jealousy.

Feareth the Dragon. Unrelentingly
Wars he upon the Good; not knowing, he
Will quench all light lest it should prove to be
The Light foreshown. Oh, imbecility,
Thus to approach Sun-clad Virginity.

Interlude: Prayer to Our Lady

Mother of Love undying, list to me:
Behold my weakness and infirmity;
See how the arrow sticketh into me
Which draws my vital strength, and leaveth me
All wounded and in pain to cry to thee.

Mother of dread Compassion, lo, in thee
Is consolation found and sympathy.
Mother of Grace and Light, illumine me;
And when temptation presses, stand by me
And shield me from the Dragon's enmity.

Jesus Himself thou shieldedst. Thou wert she
Who held Him in her arms when He would flee
From the pursuer's fangs. Ah, Mother, see
How the dire hate of this Arch-enemy
Seeks to disturb my confidence in thee.

My all I give to Jesus; all to thee -
Body and soul, with every faculty:
Yet darkness cometh and enshroudeth me,
Although I grasp at naught but Him and thee:
Mother of Jesus, drive this night from me.

Lo, on the confines of the Eternal Sea,
My soul lies struggling vainly to be free
From habits and occasions. Pray for me,
Whose intercession sure alone may be
The ray to pierce the cloud that darkens me.

Under thy mantle, Jesus hid with thee;
Under thy mantle, Mother, hide thou me:
Through the long night, as Joseph toiled by thee,

Lay Jesus sleeping: so would I rest with thee,
Safe from the malice of the Enemy.

O Jesus, Mary, Joseph; lo, I be
In heart and soul - in all - your property.
O Jesus, Mary, Joseph, be with me
Through the dark night of dying agony,
That I may pass in your sweet company.

Our Lady's Petition

Lo, in the dead of night the Sacred Three
Move slowly onward - silent; prayerfully.
Left is their world behind; the plan that he
So lately made, abandoned: stedfastly
The Word revealed to Joseph, followeth he.

O best Beloved of creatures; lo, be ye
God's chosen Ones; yet wanderers ye be,
Homeless and shelterless. Oh, grief, to see
God so encompassed with infirmity,
Thus driven from home through Hell's malignity.

But in her heart sings Mary inwardly,
Clasping the Baby-God upon her knee:
'With all my soul, O Lord, I sing of Thee.
Though by the enemy we straitened be,
Yet fear we nothing so as we have Thee.

'Thy Cause canst Thou maintain. Thy dignity
Is greater than the heavens. Although Thou be
An Infant weak upon a Mother's knee,
Thou canst rebuke the Gentiles; they will flee
When Thou shalt judge them in Thine equity.

'Arise, O Lord, and may our weakness be
Thy Sword of strength. Yea, let the Gentiles see
There is a God in Sion. Verily,
For judgment art Thou come: so shalt Thou be
The Judge of heathen Kings provoking Thee.

'Lord God, arise. Behold the misery
About to rend those Mothers' hearts, and be
The Crown of those whose lives are given for thee.

O God, my God, whose Arm doth strengthen me,
Succour them now in their adversity.

'Our Refuge art Thou, Lord. Thy poor are we.
In tribulations, lo, we trust in Thee.
Thou Lord art with us. We rejoice in Thee,
Who hast regard to our humility,
And raised us up from death to Life in Thee.'

Saint Joseph's Prayer

Saint Joseph takes the bridle; carefully
The path selects; but rugged is the way;
The hills are steep and stony; far away
Should they be on the road 'ere break of day,
Southward to west - and time brooks no delay.

Brave is his heart and strong. Yet oh, to see
Those Sacred Ones benighted. Prayerfully
His soul is lifted up. 'It cannot be
But God-Jehovah judgeth righteously,
Albeit His Ways are full of mystery.

'Lord God of Abraham, whose own are we,
Look on Thine Holy Ones, and let them be
Girt with Thy strength. O God, we look to Thee
To be our Shield in this adversity,
Our Safeguard in this dire extremity.

'Dost Thou not send us, Lord, away from Thee?
From Juda's land, and David's City? See,
As fugitives and wanderers we flee
Before the terrors of the Gentiles. We,
Despised and helpless, have no Home but Thee.

'Look on the Face of Thine Anointed. See,
How may I guard Him in this misery?
Look on the tender Mother. Is not she
Dearer to Thee than Angels? Who may be
The Seed of righteous David, if not she?

'Lord, give them strength to come where they may be
Protected and in safety. 'Tis for Thee,
O God, to lead us surely until we

The plains of Misraim in the south may see.
Then shall we know that we are following Thee.

Lo, to the brave true heart all tenderly
Whispers the Soul of Jesus: 'Joseph, be
Fearless as faithful. I, the Lord, am He
Who leddeth Joseph like a sheep - am He,
Thy Guardian and thy God, now leading thee.

Dream of the Infant Jesus

Meanwhile, the God of Heaven, peacefully
Reposeth on His Virgin-Mother's knee.
His tender Form so hides His Majesty,
That on Him may be lavished fearlessly
The unfathomed love of sweet Maternity.

Clothed hath the Lord His awful Dignity
With Flesh and Spirit Human. He would be
To wants created subject: so hath He
Himself immersed in such fragility
As needs the Mother's love to satisfy.

Asleep upon her knee: awake is He
In Spirit, and His Human Soul can see
The Vision Beatific. Yea, can He
The Light that floodeth His Humanity
Behold in Glory: God and Man is He.

And in this Glory which alone may be
By souls sustained in their perfection, He
As Man beholds all which eternally
To Him as God was present - all that He
Is bound to suffer by His Own Decree.

The Infant smiles. Oh, what is this that He
Beholdeth in the Vision? Lovingly
The Mother gazes. 1 Knows He not that He
Is persecuted by the enemy?
That from the Land of Promise, fleeth He?'

Her thought He reads, and answers speedily -
Her soul with light o'er flooding: 'I am He,
The Saviour, who have chosen thee to be

Sole Sharer of My wondrous destiny -
The only Consolation given to Me.'

Doth He reveal how in that Light sees He
The Cross, the Spear, the ruthless enmity,
The persecution, and the infamy,
And the rejection of His Love? - Nay, He
The crown beholds, which He will win for thee.

The Robbers' Cave

O Mystic Cloud, bearing Divinity
Over the plains of Juda; wondrously
Thyself the Almighty beareth, and for thee
A place of safety finds. Oh, verily,
The watch is vain of the Arch-enemy.

Gained is the mountain-height from whence to see
The border Land of Egypt. Wearily
Ye look for shelter as the night draws nigh;
And Joseph searches with anxiety
For some safe cleft, or thickly spreading tree.

Meanwhile, the Mother whispers secretly
In prayer to Him who slumbers on her knee:
'Thine is the World, O Lord; we look to Thee
Thine Own to shield: what other Hope need we?
Our care art Thou, Sweet Babe - Thy care are we.'

Behold, a Cave in sight. Ah, verily,
The dwelling-place of Brigands. Joseph, he
Into the Mother's face looks up; and she
The mute enquiry answers silently
With grave assent, and calm tranquillity.

* * *

Her sweet demeanour and her dignity
All hearts have won. No fierce hostility
They show, but simple hospitality.
Each does his part, that so the weary Three
In peace may sleep, and in security.

Alas, for sorrow lurketh secretly
Within the Ark of hospitality,

Sin's prototype. Oh, dire calamity -
Wailing upon his mothers lap, they see
An Infant, seamed and scored with leprosy.

The Mother of the Healer speaks: 'Oh, see,
The water which hath washed my Babe: do ye
The Infant bathe therein.' Oh, mystery:
No sooner is her word obeyed, when see,
Cleansed is the Infant, instantaneously.

Union of Wills

Oh, Tenderness of Jesus; verily,
A path Thou makest through the stormy sea,
E'en in the hearts of sinners. Thou didst see
In that poor Leper-Child a soul to be
Ransomed and cleansed, in Paradise with Thee.

And Mary-Advocate; how gracefully
Hangs on Thy Will her prayer; it lives through Thee.
All her kind intercession comes from Thee
Whose Will it is, that prayer shall ever be
The golden link uniting us with Thee.

Thy Will her soul reflects. Oh, truly she
Thy Mouthpiece is, and therefore, tenderly
Thy favour she entreats. Ah, verily,
Here lies the secret of the mystery
Which forms the knot of Dual-unity.

God is with Man united. This will be
The true solution of this Mystery:
For in the Soul of Jesus we may see
Those separate Wills distinct, yet perfectly
Each with the other blending, endlessly.

The God-Man is our Principle; and He
In such wise perfected Humanity
That in each soul, like His, there needs must be
A human and Divine concordancy,
Fruition meet of future bliss - to be.

Union of strength with weakness - gloriously
Hath Jesus this accomplished; yea, we see
In Him the triumph of Humanity:

For not by Strength Divine alone did He
The battle win, reversing God's decree;

But that God's Will in us unendingly
And with fruition may accomplished be,
The human will's responsibility
Must live in action, and reformed be
Through the sweet force of Dual-unity.

The Might of Intercession

Oh, Might of Intercession, that shall be
The stronghold of our weak humanity;
Strength that is Godlike, likest unto Thee
Who, with strong cries and tears, ceased not to be
The Pleader for Thy brethren, mightily.

In Jesus, Man with God doth, verily,
An Intercessor prove. His Strength doth lie
In knowledge of the creature's nothing. He,
Even He, is heard, for that He reverently
Abased is before Divinity.

And yet to Him, in His Humanity,
Is given all Power in earth and Heaven: to be
Poured out in judgment, e'en as all shall be
Under His rule. Oh, endless dignity;
Oh, endless crown; oh, endless Deity.

That which our Lord in His Humanity
Was to His Godhead, so to Him would be
His Sacred Mother. Human alone was she,
Yet strong in grace, and in integrity -
From Him receiving strength and dignity.

Mother of Intercession thou wilt be,
Since thou art God's Own Mother - for in thee
Is fixed the golden chain of sympathy
That links our earth with Heaven. Verily,
Strong in thy strength, dear Mother, we may be.

For Jesus loves - oh, loveth tenderly
Those whom He seeks with so great charity;
The weak, the poor, the helpless: such were we

Whom in the wilderness He found, and He
Binds up our wounds, and heals us soothingly.

He is our Father, and our Mother, she -
Our Parents both be they; their offspring we:
And as a Mother intercedes, so she,
Who is the Mirror of her Son, shall be
Heard for her reverence, unfailingly.

The Key of Intercession

Sweet Mother, touch my lips that they may be
Empowered more worthily to sing of thee.
Oh, when I lift mine untrained voice to thee,
How short it comes of thy great dignity;
How short, alas, of what I seem to see.

Oh, wonderful, that thou this poverty,
This weary helplessness of soul shouldst see,
Yet spurnest nought of this deficiency
As something worthless. Ah, then, tender me
Some little help wherewith to honour thee.

* * *

Is it not plain? As thy Maternity
The cause first was of Dual-unity,
So is that Union which took place in thee
The Key of Intercession, and the free
Unbounded interchange of Charity.

Upon the Face of God's Anointed, He
Looks down with infinite benignity:
And all His prayers are heard, since He would be,
Through sacrifice of His Humanity,
The Pleader of its cause with Deity.

And thou wouldst share the Sacrifice; wouldst be
The Victim too of that necessity -
The Victim of Compassion. Verily,
His Will and thine were one: and thine would be
The Woman's Sacrifice on Calvary.

This hast thou earned for us, that we may be
Co-partners with thy travail. Ceaselessly

The Church's voice cries Heav'n-ward: one with thee,
And one with Him whose sacred Spouse is she -
His work she carries on triumphantly.

All through the Vast of His creation, see
The Law of Dual-oneness- Law, to be
In action perfect - perfect in degree
Alone where first it ruled; then, diversely,
Claiming its share in this world's destiny.

The Foot of the Woman

Misraim, awake. Behold hath risen in thee
The Day-Star from the east. Awake to see
Thy darkness breaking. Lifteth suddenly
The cloud of night, to show the track where He
Proceeds in strength and lowly majesty.

Egypt, arise. Rise from thy lethargy.
Hark, 'tis the God of Gods, who calleth thee.
Lo, in thy midst the Idols fall, and He
Reigns in their place: then answer speedily;
Yea, at His feet bow down and humble thee.

The Queen herself in courteous majesty,
Bearing the King of Kings, is entering thee.
Lo, where they rest beneath the spreading Tree
While blessings multiply exceedingly,
Blessings of light and of prosperity.

Arise; arise. In wonder shalt thou see
The Temples of the Sun despised - shalt see
The bulwarks broken of idolatry:
Silent the oracles that spake to thee,
And all thy Devil-worship lost to thee

O thou, Bethshemeth, that degradedly
Hast eaten dust, arise. Tis given to thee
The Light of Light to witness; openly
Him to behold whose Light is Verity.
Break thou thine Idols, Rise and make thee free.

Behold the Lord ascendeth now, and He
Upon a Light Cloud rideth; this is He
Who entereth Egypt, and with majesty

Shaketh the Idols in His wrath: for He
As Judge and Saviour will acknowledged be.

Which of the Great Ones of the earth, think ye,
Have left in Egypt such a track as He?
What Kings have entered Egypt openly,
Thus to confound earth's worst idolatry?
Who but the Son of Mary? - Only He.

The Cradle of the Saints

O favoured Land, whose hospitality
By God is chosen for His Sacred Three.
He will not fail in generosity,
But render thousandfold to you who be
Guardians of these, in their adversity.

May the remembrance of the Sanctity
That filled thy groves, O Egypt, cling to thee:
May the dear dust those Feet have trodden, be
A secret treasure-house of graces, be
A home and harbinger of Purity.

Yea, far into the ages, lo, we see
A train of Saints and Doctors, steadily
Peopling thy deserts; teaching faithfully
The Truth in Jesus. Mary, lo, through thee
Heaven's fairest blossoms reach maturity.

The Laras were her pleasure-gardens: she
With joy looked down the ripening fruits to see,
And tended them with care; yea, gratefully
Poured graces down upon the Land where she
Had dwelt in peace and holy poverty.

Oh, full of voiceless teaching shouldst thou be,
Asylum blest of Sacred Infancy.
Thy very stones would cry inaudibly -
Here did the Son of God repose, and she,
The Mother of the Son, rest fearlessly.

Here did the Choirs of Angels crowd to be
A Court condign for that sweet Company.
Here did the Holy Spirit tranquilly

Rest in the bosom of His Family,
And bless the Land that gave them liberty.

O Holy Ghost, whose Name eternally
Lay in the Secret of Divinity,
Until made known to Mary; praise to Thee,
Divine Refulgence, that through her we see
God's Love revealed, God's endless Charity.

The Sibyl

The Word of God, descending from on high,
Had spoken in the world in days gone by:
For many an ancient Seer in prophecy
Uttered his voice, and gave his warning cry
Against the toils of the Arch-enemy.

Lo, as a watchman on the tower was he.
His voice was as a whirlwind, suddenly
Breaking on those who dealt unfaithfully:
Calling by night and day reproachfully
To such as hearing - heeded not the cry.

Night closed around the world, yet was He by,
The Lord of Hosts, who could alone defy
The darkness of the nations. Verily,
Rode He upon the tempest and did fly
Upon the whirlwind's course, triumphantly.

Vain was the wisdom of the Enemy.
In vain a veil o'er his deformity
In sacred rites he drew around, that he
Might plunge the nations through obscurity
Into the slough of infidelity.

Ev'n in his temples was he fain to see
A light athwart his darkness - Devilry
Turned from its dire intent. So mightily
Rang through his oracle the Lord's decree,
That Sibyls saw, and sang with jubilee.

For, mid the gloom of heathendom rose she
The one fair Guerdon of Virginity,
The one bright Record of the Purity

That needful is for Vision. Blest was she
Till end of time, to whom 'twas given to see

The grand Conception of the Deity;
The Spotless Mirror of Virginity;
Who in the heavens should cause His Light to be
The Day-dawn to the nations; and should be
Virgin and Mother both - inviolably.

The Sibyl's Testimony: No. I

Lo, to the Sibyl was it given to see
The Virgin-Mother. All entranced did she
Exclaim: 'A Virgin Pure, indeed, I see
Who through the glory of her Chastity
Is raised to honour and high dignity.

'Found is she worthy of the Mystery
In her to be fulfilled. For verily,
She to the world a Child will give, to be
The Son of Thunder. Mighty and radiant, He
The world will rule in deep tranquillity.'

Thus cried the Hellespontian Sibyl: she
The words re-echoed of the prophecy
Of Juda's holy Seer: 'Behold,' saith he,
'The Virgin shall a Son conceive, and He
Emmanuel is (God with us) called to be.'

The Phrygian next in order stands, and she
Points to the working of the mystery:
'Into the Virgin's noble Bosom, He
Whom the Great Father causeth secretly
To come, by Angel's voice announced shall be.'

The Sibyl Tiburtine, thus singeth she:
'Cometh the day when, from eternity
The Prince of Light descends, our Light to be.
Rejoice, O Earth, He comes to set thee free,
To blot out sin, and sin's delinquency.

'Justice He claimeth back for all; yea, He
Is King of Justice from eternity:
And He will come: His resting-place shall be

The Bosom of the Virgin-Queen; and she,
Queen of the World for evermore shall be.'

Thus spake the Prophet of the Lord: 'Oh, see
The Wonder that shall be prepared when He
Who is a Man, shall circumscribed be
And compassed by a Woman.' Verily,
This was the Man: the Virgin-Mother, she.

The Sibyl's Testimony: No. II

The Delphian Sibyl, unreservedly
Thus chanteth of this sacred Mystery:
'Within the Spotless Virgin's Bosom, He
Without a Father shall begotten be -
He who God is, through all Eternity.'

The Sibyl Tiburtine, thus, wondrously:
'Lo, from the Land of Naz'reth riseth she
Whose Bosom Pure is preordained to be
The Dwelling of th' Incarnate God - and He
On Bethl'em's plain shall manifested be.'

Singeth the Erythraean Sibyl: 'See;
Behold the Son of God: from Heaven comes He
A noble Hebrew Virgin shall it be
Who to her God shall give Maternity -
Virgin and Mother both, alone is she.'

Hark; the Cimmerian Sibyl: 'See,
Tender in years, beauteous in Face is she,
The Virgin-Mother, who will tenderly
Nourish with milk, the King upon her knee -
The Angels' King from all eternity.'

The Samian Sibyl: ' Riseth presently
The Day-dawn, scattering darkness. Lo, I see
Approach the King of Life, who touched shall be
By mortals - for a Virgin-Mother He
Will choose, whose Breast His hiding-place shall be.'

Crieth the Persian Sibyl joyously:
'Born of a Virgin-Mother shall He be
The Prince of Bliss. The only One is He

To bear Salvation to the fallen - He
Shall ride the Ass's foal right regally.'

And yet one more; the Cumaean Sibyl, she
Sings of the Holy One's Humility:
'Humble in all things, lo, God's Son shall be,
Born of a Virgin Pure: and she shall be
The Mother of His choosing: blest is she.'

Morning Glow

Thus did the Day-dawn glimmer: though they be
Heathen, the Chaste they see through chastity.
Longing for her they cease not ardently
To lift in praise their voice, and greedily
Claim as their own this Queen that is to be.

O Mother, Queen thou wert; long ages, by
Wisdom, proclaimed thine advent; the Most High
Looked on thy beauty with complacency
All through those ages dark, and blessedly
Athwart their night a ray He sent from thee.

E'en as the sun ere day-break, stealthily
Shoots up his hidden beams, as though to see
The joy of his awaking, gloamingly
The Light which shone in secret, stole to be
A clear forerunner of our Sun, in thee.

So God-forsaken seemed the world to be,
So sunk in darkness, steeped in misery,
That without rival roamed the Enemy
Seeking thy lightest footstep to descry,
O Woman, dreaded for thine enmity.

Yet sought in vain; for 'mid the panoply
Of his unholy rites, behold and see,
Eternal Wisdom ruled: yea, chose to be
Beholden and acknowledged. Thus did He
The heathen vestal teach to honour thee.

O Mother of all Ages, Light, to be
Our Light till time shall cease - these worshipped thee
Though but a gleam pierced their idolatry:

Though an uncertain glimpse they caught of thee
That glimpse was Truth, and they acknowledged thee.

Mother of Light Incarnate, far from thee
Must fly the ancient mists of Devilry -
Far from the Babe thou sucklest on thy knee:
Since, if that distant dawn broke splendidly,
What to the heathen must the daylight be?

The Mother's Mission

At length the tempest passed: the hours went by;
The Dragon watched in vain; and secretly
Flowed on in peace the Life that was to be
The Light of all the World - since, Hidden, He
With Mary and with Joseph willed to be.

Oh, Hidden Life: for thirty years is He
To Parents subject. Unreservedly
Accepts He Human attributes that be
The portion of the creature. Gradually
As Man He is what God could never be.

Mother of Wisdom; lo, it was to thee
That Jesus bowed Himself subjectively:
Thy hand first helped His Infant Steps, and He
Clung to thy stronger fingers trustingly -
As children fear to fall, so trembled He.

His Teacher, Mother, wert thou - thou wert she
To guide His Infant Lispings. God was He:
Yet not as God learned He in all to be
Obedient - unto dying. Man was He:
And grew as Man to Youth, from Infancy.

As Man He gained experience; yet did He
Know from the world's beginning, that to be
Which now from day to day He learned from thee.
Good had His Word alone created: He
Now learns as Man what loss of Good can be.

Eve, faithless, disobedient - verily,
By ruling Adam brought delinquency
And death to life. Wherefore, most willingly

Did Jesus, through subjection unto thee,
O Faithful Virgin, change that destiny.

Subjection and Obedience: thus doth He
Our self-willed pride rebuke, who love to be
Preeminent in all things: thus did He
Precede us on our way, who, verily,
Learned how to govern through humility.

Mary Learns to Command

Mother of God, how wondrous the decree
That God should learn obedience under thee:
That Wisdom's Self this awful potency
Should to a Creature give, and thus would be
Subject indeed, for thirty years, to thee.

And who so simple, gentle, sweet as He?
How light obedience was. How readily
Gave He Himself to each command from thee.
Divine He made obedience; teaching thee
How to command Divine Humility.

In that calm Hidden Life there could not be
Or flaw, or imperfection. There would be
The Order of Divine Tranquillity,
Through which His Sacred Human Soul could
The Vision Beatific ceaselessly.

And Mary's Soul, a never-ebbing sea
Of holy contemplation, plunged in Thee,
O Fount Perennial of the Trinity:
While Love maternal blessed the right to be
The Ruler of God's dear Humanity.

O sacred Spring of pure Maternity,
That hadst no part in pure Divinity:
Thou as a creature grewest, thus to be
Evermore full of capability,
Evermore nigh the Source of Charity.

O Full of Grace - to bridge Infinity;
That all but toucheth God's Divinity;
That gave the Mother's hand stability;

That lent the Mother's voice authority,
And wove the golden link her God to tie.

He learned Obedience, and she learned to be
A Queen and Intercessor both. Thus He
His Mother taught through human ways; and she
Learned to command - yet studied secretly
His Will, who bowed to her authority.

Paradise

Mother of Contemplation; who be we
To curiously search a mystery
Hallowed by adoration, silently
Offered to Him who lived and wrought for thee?
And chose a Hidden Life to lead, with thee?

Hidden it was: for in simplicity
Poor and despised and humble they must be,
Who by habitual grace would learn to be
In all things fit for suffering. So would she
Naught change of their accustomed poverty.

Oh, what a Garden of rare growth would be
The little Home of Nazareth. There we see
The Lily of the Valley modestly
Nestling therein: while Sharon's Rose is she,
Which Joseph's Lily guards unceasingly.

Their Garden, how they tend. Behold and see,
The Balm of Gilead, and the noble tree
Of Fortitude; pale Patience; Meekness; see
The Violet drooping in her Modesty,
And the wide-clustering flowers of Charity.

Here dwells the Snowdrop clothed in Chastity,
Lifting her head through winter's-snow; and see,
The Myrrh of Self-denial, whence the bee
Draws fragrant Honey. Here of Life the Tree
Of unsurpassing Durability.

This was an Eden of felicity,
Untouched by Serpent's trail, or liberty
Unsanctified: an Earthly Trinity

Reflected the Divine. How peacefully
Must they have followed out their destiny.

Oh, blest indeed the Home prepared by thee,
Virgin Immaculate, and the decree
That gave us Jesus in thy company.
But ah, beneath that calm look deep, and see -
The Shadow of the Cross awaiteth thee.

Education

Dear Mother of Salvation, lo, for thee
Thy thirty years' retreat was bound to be
Thine Education for futurity -
Since thine had been a work ordained to be
Finished alone in God's Eternity.

Thy Life in His was hidden. He in thee
Found the Co-partner of His Destiny.
To human laws the Man would subject be,
Albeit the Godhead with Humanity
In Hypostatic Union deigned to be.

The laws of Nature bade that He should be
To time indebted for maturity.
Yet time for Him was no necessity,
But to obey conditions. So, for thee
He lived and wrought - He educated thee.

The graces of His giving were, in thee,
The Birth-gift of thy Pure Humanity-
Bright jewels hidden in a shrine, to be
Worn on thy brow, and merit gaining. See,
Thy sixteen summers crowned they wondrously.

But time had yet a work wherein should be
Accomplished things Divine in Him and thee.
Forth He would go and serve His Ministry;
Whilst thou must live apart, and patiently
The hour of dread abide for Him and thee.

Dimly at first, but ever steadily
Burned in thy soul the Fire of Heaven's Decree.
God's Sacred Word, by grace infused, would be

Its lantern and its light; and now doth He -
Himself the Word - thy Teacher deign to be.

By word and by example, surely He
Doth thy brave soul inure to hardship. See,
It grows by correspondence - learns to be
Familiar with His Cross: till, perfectly
Resigned, self-immolated, thou shouldst be.

Please and Pain: An Interlude

Created Nature hath been made to be
Dependent on its equability:
Perfection lies in general harmony
Of all its different parts - Stability
And Order reigning o'er Diversity.

God made our Human Nature outwardly
Fitted to circumstances, and inwardly,
Self-regulating. This can only be
Accomplished when the moral force is free,
Or is not lost in some obscurity.

Pleasure and Pain mark out most vividly
These phases of our being. We can see
How pain outweighs, by its intensity -
Whether of soul or body - constantly,
The greatest earthly-born felicity.

Oh, Life is weary: even when we be
Most certain of our aim, and consciously
Warring against the unseen Powers which be
In league with Nature fallen, and strive to be
Faithful to God and our high destiny.

O Nature, tired with striving: can it be
The self-same, modelled for felicity?
The Nature fitted for eternity,
So richly dowered by God, in Him to be
The Home of Joy and Rest eternally?

Thus sighs the Soul; and looking up to thee,
Mother of Mercy, questions painfully
The reason of this hard necessity;

The reason, wherefore this obscurity
Must hide us from our perfect entity.

O Mother, hear; thou who wert ever free
From the least stain of sin's obliquity,
Thou who our Pattern art - I follow thee -
And in each gracious Footstep that I see,
Help me mine own to place, undoubtingly.

The School of Suffering

Oh, let the Light, however great, but be
A little shadowed, instantaneously
Our joy to grief gives place. Instinctively
The sentiment of instability
Causeth all desolation - night to be.

O Prudent Virgin, art thou doomed to be
Partaker of such darkness? Yes: from thee
A little while the Light which lighteth thee
Is veiled and clouded over. Thou wilt be
The Pattern of a perfect Sympathy.

Thou too art in the School of Suffering. See
Behold the lesson first appointed thee:
All innocent thyself, yet wilt thou be
Acquainted truly with adversity,
And share the lot of our humanity.

Oh, what more grievous Suffering can there be
Appointed for God's children, than to see
No Light around? and His dear Face to be
Hid, or estranged? Such dire calamity
Must drive the spirit to extremity.

To us poor darklings, ever this must be
A portion of our penance - not to see,
Or not to feel God's gentle Majesty;
To live by faith alone, and stedfastly
Within our light to walk, though poor it be.

But in the glorious daylight, which for thee,
O Tender Virgin, had arisen, 'twould be
A desolation all express, when He,

The Sun of thy existence, willed to be
A little while obscured and lost to thee.

Oh, in the midst of thy serenity,
What must this thunder-bolt have been to thee?
A portent of a dreadful certainty?
A preparation for the day when He
Shall leave thee all alone on Calvary?

Spiritual Growth

Dear Mother of Compassion, thou shouldst be
In all things like to Him: and whereas He
Took Human Flesh for suffering, and would be
By Nature habits taught; so, verily,
Through lessons such as these He strengthened thee.

In all things thou wert faultless - bodily
Without an imperfection that could be
An inlet to confusion. Gracefully
Did every nerve and fibre work, to be
The faithful organ of a Spirit free.

O Sacred Virgin, speed my praise of thee,
Who valiant wert by Nature: for in thee
Grace reigned supreme, and held in harmony
Each separate link where nothing weak could be,
And Nature wrought with Grace concordantly.

Yet wert thou human: and humanity
Is perfected by trial. Strength must be
Ever assayed, and by maturity
Must gather volume. Thus it was, for thee
To grow in strength and wisdom mightily.

And since a Mother only, perfectly
The Mother's work may understand; so she,
Who to the whole world would a Mother be,
Should know the sufferings of humanity -
Should feel of sin the weight and misery.

Thus, in those days of searching, spent by thee
With Joseph sorrowing, didst thou learn to be
Dark and benighted; learnedst tenderly

To suffer with the suffering; mightily
To lay up force to crush the Enemy.

And on thy spirit strengthened, painfully
Unfolded that which ne'er for thee could be
Aught but a vision. Mother, thou didst see
The punishment of Sin's malignity -
What loss of Light, of Joy, of God must be.

Jesus in the Temple

O Jesus, Splendour of the Father, see,
How 'neath the veil of Boyhood Thou wouldst be
The Enlightener of the learned - reverently
Discoursing as a Child, yet secretly
Informing docile souls that looked for Thee.

How God-like are Thine actions: verily,
Thou art the Word Himself. What comes from Thee
With Life and Light must ever pregnant be.
In all things, as is fittest, Thou wouldst be
Example, Teacher, Guide, unerringly.

The Way, the Truth, the Life, Thou needst must be:
They knew it not, those Doctors. Yet, through Thee
They felt the Life; and questioned wondringly
To hear Thine answers - thus the Truth they see;
Oh, will they find, perchance, the Way in Thee?

Thou, Nicodemus, later years, may be
Rememberedst that day; when, secretly,
Thou earnest to the Source of Verity;
Then burst on thee the Light of Charity,
And Truth and Life lit up the Way for thee.

This was Thy Father's Business, which would Thee,
O Tender Jesus, draw so brenningly:
Here are the souls which, from eternity,
As first-fruits of Thy Mission Thou didst see,
And yearned to lead with God-like cords to Thee.

Yea, this, O Lord, in every time shall be
The resolution of this Mystery.
Thy Manhood was not shrunk in Infancy;

And Adolescence dwarfed no power in Thee
By age to be developed. Thou couldst be

The Man Christ Jesus, veiled. So wouldst Thou be
As Babe, as Youth, as Adolescent, free;
And bounded only by the Charity
Which brought Thee from Thy Father's Side to be
In all things subject to Humanity.

Mary's Authority

How came it, Holy Mother, that by thee
Those days were spent in such obscurity?
Was it through anguish falling suddenly?
Or loss of confidence? or fear lest He
E'en now might leave His home in Galilee?

Or was it self-reproach? For verily,
Though all those years one thought alone would be
The main-spring of thine actions- carefully
To guard the Treasure thus confided thee,
And hide the Secret only known to thee.

Or did the natural anxiety
Which every Mother owns, o'ermaster thee?
Hadst thou to learn by fresh experience, He,
Child though He were, had yet no need of thee?
And knowing all things, lost could never be?

Unfailing was thy faith- it could not be
A moment shaken. Neither wouldst thou be
In aught inordinate; but tranquilly
The anguish bear, whilst Joseph carefully
Each step retraced - enquiring anxiously.

Mother of Stedfastness, we learn from thee
Who wert so nigh to God, that grief may be
Most poignant, even where the soul shall be
Most firmly rooted in stability -
Since Faith is Light in darkness, which shall be

Quenched in the Light of Immortality.
So when thy Sun was hid, 'twould be for thee
As though thy Heaven were closed, and painfully

Would all thy natural emotions try
To prove their rights in thy Maternity.

Thou knewest, Mother, what His Mind must be;
And had not sorrow overclouded thee,
Thou sooner wouldst have traced Him. Yet did He
Some grace abstract, that thy Authority
Throughout all ages might acknowledged be.

The Subjection of Jesus

He sits among the Doctors. Verily,
Consumes His Heart a Fire Divine, to be
About His Father's Business. Yet doth He
Thy heart behold, O Mother, drawing thee
With bands of love and mutual sympathy.

He notes thy coming footsteps tenderly:
Into thy face He looks, as wistfully,
Joy breaking through thy tears, with dignity
Unchanged and with authority;
Thou askest Him one word - the reason why?

Replies He; but, in words undoubtedly
Conveying to thy soul ineffably
A Light from others hidden, answers: 'Why
To find Me sought ye Me? Knew not ye
About My Father's Business I should be?'

The Work Divine unhesitatingly
He quits, obedient to her summons. She
The Word thus uttered ponders silently,
And treasures in her heart; while He
Leaves in her breast the unsolved mystery.

For why, O Mother, this docility
From Him who is thy Maker? Surely, He
Whose Will was thine from all eternity
Could every wish of thine prevent, yet be
In all Supreme which touched Divinity.

His Godhead was with His Humanity
So wondrously united, that to thee
Would seem obedience given of Deity:

Yet was the Human Will alone to be
The object of subjection unto thee.

And as in Time - so in Eternity:
In Time we learn each lesson that shall be
Eternally performed. Deeper the mystery
Than we can fathom; yet, perchance, we see
How Jesus rules through Dual-unity.

Saint Joseph's Mission Ended

So passed the Life in Nazareth. Yet see;
Mother of Jesus, 'twas not meant for thee
Without the Cross to live. Yea, naturally,
By thee must every suffering tasted be
Consistent with thy nature's purity.

God was thy Portion from thine infancy;
And ties of nature passed away from thee
Ere yet a Home thou lovedst. Thou shouldst be
An Orphan, and thy Heaven-wrought destiny
Was printed on thy soul indelibly.

Yea, God can inter-penetratingly
Enter the substance of an entity
By Him created; and accordingly,
An influence exercise which only He
Possesses in a soul by Nature free.

So in thy tender years, God gave to thee
A Father in thy Husband. He would be
His Viceroy and thy Guardian -secretly
God's eloquence had irresistibly
The Virgin-Spirit won, and kept for thee.

But, freedom of the Soul must always be
The point of union with authority;
And as the Soul expands in purity
The Voice of God rings clearer, and will be
The Lode-stone of responsibility.

God guided thus Saint Joseph: so did he
By willing correspondence silently
God's purposes fulfill. By clarity

Of soul, and freedom in docility
Learned he God's Secrets in a mystery.

Thus Mary's secrets were her own: and she
Left them to God's All-sovereign Majesty:
While she her Husband followed reverently,
Were each by God instructed, and would be
One heart, one soul, in perfect harmony.

Death of Saint Joseph

But Jesus grew in stature: and when He,
As Man, became mature, then tenderly
To Joseph's soul it was revealed, that he
His work had finished. Meek, resignedly,
Bowed he his head to the Divine decree.

Age came on quickly. He had learned to be
Wrapped in the Love of Jesus; yet was he
Ever intent on working patiently:
No other guerdon claiming, but to see
How best to smooth that lot of poverty.

How had his own been blest. How fervently
The Lord he praised who him had chosen to be
The House-provider for His Family.
How watched he every footstep. How did he
Hang on each look of Jesus, reverently.

But not to Joseph dare we deem would be
Revealed the Light which Mary, constantly
Kept in her secret counsel. Why should he
Be harrowed by a vision of which she
Alone was called to share the mystery?

All through those years he knew enough to be
A faithful Servant. True; we ever see
That little is foreshown of destiny.
By faith we live; that so each day may we
Its portion learn of God's all-just Decree.

A Shadow of Eternal Love was he
Over those Blessed Ones. All care, that he
Had in his power to spare Them, sure would be

Never neglected. Him to spare, would be
The care of Him who loveth tenderly.

The Master calls: his hour is come to die.
The Priest he knows is God, who graciously
Consoles and blesses; while all tearfully
Holding his hand, the Virgin-Wife kneels by.
Thus passed the Soul in peace, in ecstasy.

Saint Joseph's Reception in Limbo

O happy slumber, falling tenderly
Upon the eyelids of the Just, to be
Some little while in that fair company
Of Saints and Prophets, who expectantly
Are waiting for the Flower of David's Tree.

Gather they not around to learn from thee,
O Blessed Joseph, what their hope may be?
Thy spirit, bright and pure, transcendently
Within their midst, like sunshine, falls; and see,
The shades of Limbo brighten visibly.

The Patriarchs in order look to thee,
O Messenger of Peace: and eagerly
Await thy message. Abraham turns on thee
A look of Patriarchal dignity;
With David, King and Prince of Psalmody.

And thou, Isaias, whose pure soul would be
Foremost to understand - God's Voice was he
Proclaiming the report which none would see;
For none believed the word of prophecy
Of Him, the tender Shoot of Jesse's Tree.

And plaintive Jeremias; yea, and he
Who saw the Living Creatures wondrously
The Throne supporting; where, in Majesty
The Son of Man in might appeared to be
Clothed with the Fire of Heaven transcendently.

Here patient Job, and grave Methussaleh;
And thy dear namesake, Joseph, thou wouldst see
And comtemplative Isaac, verily,

With tender-hearted Israel here would be;
And Juda, Root of Jesse's family.

All feel the time is coming; and to thee
Turn with a look of deep expectancy.
When Adam riseth: 'Son beloved,' saith he,
'Comfort hast thou to give; then let it be
To us delivered. Lo, we wait on thee.'

The Message

And Joseph looks around. He seems to be
Yet in the arms of Jesus - yet to be
Touched by the ringers of God's Mother. He
No anguish feeleth; no distress can be
For him in store. He speaks consolingly:

'Fathers, from those I come, whom anxiously
In by-gone ages ye desired to see.
His touch hath healed my infirmity:
Her prayer hath gained this very grace for me
That I, in light am here, to comfort ye.

'Fathers, a little while and we shall see
Himself amongst us. Oh, in verity,
The Lord is gracious. God of Love is He
Who hath redeemed His people - fear not ye;
Who knows us each by name - the Lord is He.

Then doth a chorus rise; a jubilee
Rings in that prison drear: 'Our God is He,
The Holy One, Creator. Verily,
A way made He amid the surging sea.
His promises are sure; the Lord is He,

'Who said: "The floods shall not pass over thee;
The flow of rivers shall not cover thee;
The flames of Hell shall never injure thee;
Though thou shouldst walk therein, it shall not be
That thou shalt be consumed. I am with thee;

'"For I, the Lord thy God, will honour thee;
Thee have I loved; my Life I give for thee;
The deaf shall hear, and all the blind shall see."

We are His witnesses. O God, we be
Thy children. Loose our long captivity.'

Deep answering to deep, and wailingly,
Lo, in the nether distance plaintively
The Women's voices rise: 'Why tarrieth she,
The Star of our Deliverance? She,
Our Life, our Hope, our Advocate to be.'

Eve

With Jesus blessing, Mary standing by,
Still fluttering on the air his parting sigh,
Still on his lips the smile of ecstasy,
His head supported ever-tenderly,
The tear still glittering in Mary's eye -

When rings in Limbo that glad jubilee
Of Saints expectant. Joseph hears a sigh
Reaching from earth above. A tender cry
Of love and sorrow, penetratingly
Stirs through his spirit's depth. Oh, verily,

Tis Mary's spiritual touch, and he
Her wishes knows in fullest clarity.
He cannot answer, but her prayer can he
Fulfill. Than light more swift descendeth he
Into the Lower Regions, joyously.

* * *

'Mid countless generations mournfully
Sitteth the Mother of Mankind. Oh, see
How she is waited on; how tenderly
Do all her valiant daughters strive to be
Consolers in her unquenched misery.

Sarah remindeth of the prophecy
To Abram given, when, on Moriah he
His Son would sacrifice obediently:
'Thus, faithful in his deeds, became not he
The Father of the Faithful, righteously?'

'And, Reverend Mother, surely, I am she
Who bore the Promised Seed in Isaac. He

Was faithful also; and posterity
Praiseth Rebecca, who in mystery
The blessing stole for Jacob's progeny.'

Then Thamar kneeling: 'Mother, blame not me
For indiscretion, nor for infamy.
The Spirit of our God instructed me,
And urged me thus to compass secretly
The marriage-law which Juda owed to me.'

Eve's Consolers

Then Ruth, the Moabitess, modestly:
'I was a stranger; yet, 'twas given to me
To be a bearer of the Progeny.
Through me was blessed the Gentile blood, to be
In Him restored to Life, eternally.'

Then Bethsabee: 'O Mother, look on me,
Sinner and penitent: and yet through me
The King arose, who by Divine decree
The Temple raised, and Sion made to be
The centre of God's Glory, lastingly.'

Spake Jael, Wife of Haber: 'Think on me,
O Mother, by the Almighty called to be
The Smiter of the Flying, valiantly.
Did I not her foreshadow, who will be
The Smiter of thy deadliest Enemy?'

Judith, the widowed Anchoress: 'Oh, see,
Mother of all the Living. Look on me
The Handmaid of the Lord, through chastity
I struck the head of Holofernes - she
Will bruise the head of thine Arch-enemy.

Then Esther, lovely Queen: 'Dear Mother, see
In tribulation God appointed me
The Pleader for my brethren: also he
Who made me Queen, was great; yet he
My supplication granted - graciously.'

Then Eve arose, in queenly dignity:
'Hear me, ye Daughters. Blessed may ye be
Till time be mellowed in Eternity.

Yet are ye shadows only: the decree
Which dooms to death may not reversed be

'Until she cometh who will mightily
The Serpent crush whose word conceived by me
Hath brought forth death. The Word of Truth must she
Conceive, and bring forth Life - if Life may be
Restored, and death out-blotted, endlessly.'

Eve's Confession

'Yet hear me, Daughters. Said I, the decree
Must be reversed? Not else reversed may be
The doom of all my countless progeny.
Nor may it be reversed, 'till Life shall be
The Vanquisher of Death, eternally.

'Ah, hear me, Daughters. Know what 'tis to me
To suffer loss, and justly. Verily,
A satisfaction all condign must be
Offered to God's offended Majesty
Ere Life can triumph, Death can vanquished be.

'O Daughters, God is Just. Yea, verily,
Is Justice Self. But Truth is also He.
And He hath sworn, in all solemnity,
To find the Ransom, that in Justice He
May Mercy meet - and so appeased be.

'Yet hearken, Daughters. Not alone may I
The punishment endure. Ah, hear me, why
Your words bring little consolation. I
Of Death alone am cause: so, verily,
She whom we look for, Cause of Life must be.

'Who will believe of all this company,
Still less of that our masters, e'er shall be
A Woman found to change the destiny
Of such a race as ours? Oh, who can be
Born as I was, when life was given to me?

'Born of a Father without Mother. See,
Your Ancestress - in such integrity,
Faultless and pure. Oh, full of grace was she

When first she sprang to life and beauty. See,
Virgin of virgin-born. Yea, such was she.

'And such, my Daughters, must the Woman be
By God ordained our Queen of Life to be:
Untouched by sin's deflection, verily,
In Grace and in Obedience perfect - she
The Man must bear in her Virginity.'

Eve's Desolation

'Hearken, ye Daughters. Not alone was I
Destroyer of Man's holy destiny.
Oh, had I been alone, Man would not be
The fallen creature that he is. But see,
Your Father fell through tenderness for me

'I was the cause of his distress. Through me
Came sin and suffering. Lo, the Woman, she
Who is ordained Mother of Life to be
Must be the Cause of Joy through Him whom she
Shall bear - yea, Joy, eternally.

'Yet listen, O my Daughters. Verily,
The anguish overtakes me: for I see
On her my punishment must heaped be:
She, Faultless and Obedient; yet must she
Of Disobedience bear the penalty.

'My first estate through infidelity
I lost. Through great fidelity must she
That place regain, which God ordained to be
The portion of the creature. Yea, must she
Climb to the Gate of God's great Majesty

'And enter in unscathed. Oh, where shall be
The Woman found, our Advocate to be
With God, and prosper? Ages roll and we
No glimpse in this our prison house may see -
No Light of this our Hope, our Joy, to be.'

Then sank she, silent in despondency -
When lo, a distant echo claimed to be
A song of triumph, yea, of jubilee,

Far off and indistinct. They long to be
More near its source, and answer wailingly:

When lo, upon them breaketh cheerfully
The light of Joseph's presence. On his knee
Before the form of Eve, he reverently
Inclines - prevents the unspoken question: 'See,
Thy Daughter, Mary, sendeth me to thee.'

Twilight in Limbo

While yet he speaks, the place is suddenly
Filled with a shimmering glow, and seems to be
Alive with Angels' wings. Such might we see
Clothing our Angel-Guardians, were not we
So clouded by our Spirit's density.

Upriseth now a wave of jubilee
As from the depth of some unfathomed sea
Nearing the shore: the while a melody
Steals through the air like ripples gracefully
Stirring the tide incoming of the sea.

True, 'tis the voice of Angels. Yea, they be
The Angels of the Prisoners - for they
From earth have followed them, to be their stay
And true companions on their homeward way,
Through all the darkling night, till break of Day.

And lo, the Dawn hath tipped their wings, to be
A sweet forerunner of the minstrelsy
Their Angels soon will sing. And verily,
Murmured had these long years the psalmody
Which now they chant in long-drawn harmony.

'O Mary, Queen and Mother, lo, today,
By thee, a Woman, Death hath passed away.
Drop down, O Heavens: O Cloud, why dost thou stay?
Come and refresh us on our weary way,
And ope for us the Gate of Heaven today.

'O Mary, Rod of Jesse's stately Tree,
Bearing the Flower of David's Majesty;
Mary, our one dear Joy, our Liberty,

Our Life, our Sweetness and our Hope; to thee
Turn all our eyes. Come; come; and set us free.'

Then softly doth a Chorus echoingly
Ring from the prison depths: 'O Mary, we
Thy banished Daughters look and long for thee.
O Mary, hasten our deliverance. See,
We bless, we praise, we love, we worship thee.'

Eve's Daughter

Then Eve to Joseph turns: 'My Son,' saith she,
'Most dear, most welcome, how is this to be?
Relate, if so thou mayst, what is to me
The Hope of these four thousand years - that we
May hear of Mary, and may honour thee.'

'O Mother of Mankind- the Lord is He,
Omnipotent and Great; how Good is He
Who hath His Name revealed of Charity:
Lo, from the Father's Bosom cometh He
Captive, alone to lead Captivity.

'The Lord who spake in Paradise to thee -
The Word Omniscient, the Same is He
Who for us hath reversed the dread decree:
Him have I carried in mine arms, and He
A Man now is? in all maturity.'

'And what of Mary?' softly murmurs she.
And Joseph answers: 'Mother, verily,
To be her Guardian was she given to me,
Whom I for God espoused, that she might be
God's Virgin-Mother, indefectibly.'

Saith Eve: 'But what of sin? Whence, answer me,
That such pre-eminence of Grace had she
As to conceive in Flesh profaned by me?
By birth was I immaculate: but she?
How came the Birthright back? Oh, speak to me.'

'Great Mother of the Living, it was He
Who made thee what thou wert, that thou shouldst be
A perfect Offshoot from a perfect Tree:

He closed the floodgates of the Curse when she,
Daughter of Wisdom, came our Life to be.'

Cries Eve: 'Oh, wonder. Blest of all is she
Whom God so honoured in His just Decree.
My Daughter's - yea, my very flesh shall be
The Flesh of the Redeemer. Yes, through me
Me, Mother of the Living, Life shall be.'

* * *

He that hearkeneth to me shall not be confounded:
and they that work for me shall not sin.
They that explain me shall have Life Everlasting.
- *Ecclesiasticus 24:30,31*

Part Two: Redeemer and Co-Redemptrix

Rhythms LXVIII - CXXIV

The Ministry - Compassion - The Risen Life

Argument of Part Two

The Second Part follows the course of the Ministry and Passion of our Divine Lord, His Resurrection, His Risen Life, and Ascension, and concludes with the Assumption of our Blessed Lady. It treats of the position and co-operation of our Lady with regard to both. We begin by reviewing the origin and fate of sin (Rhythms 70 to 77) in which latter Rhythm the Ministry of our Lord opens out. The Marriage Feast of Cana develops our Lady's mystic share in Redemption. (Rhythm 83) The following Rhythms prove that she accompanied Him on His Missions. In the 91st Rhythm a recorded tradition is alluded to in which our Lord prepared His Mother for the Sacrifice by asking her permission. The Rhythms 97 to 114 represent the scenes of the Passion as shared in spirit by our Lady. In vision she follows her Divine Son into Limbo; and on awakening from her trance, it is granted her to behold Him in His Glorified Humanity. (Rhythm 115)

* * *

Whatever we allege in praise of the Mother, beyond all doubt extends to the Son; and again, when we honour the Son we do not turn our back on the Mother's glory. For if, according to Solomon 'a wise son maketh the father glad,' if he is the glory of his father, how much more glorious is it to be made the Mother of Wisdom Itself? But why do I attempt to praise her, whom the Prophets foretell, the Angel proclaims, the Evangelist relates to be full of glory? I praise not, because I dare not; all I do is, devoutly to unfold again what the Holy Ghost has already unfolded by the mouth of His Evangelist. - *Saint Bernard*, *"On the Annunciation"*

* * *

Is it a small glory that it hath the knowledge of truth and love, and is able to follow it up? or what is more, that in a certain way it hath been made Love itself by participation? Is it a small glory that it hath acquired conformity both of the inner and outer man; that it is above all things that are in the world, outside God, and that it is hindered by no existing thing and by the fear of none? By whatever wind it may be driven it will not be liable to

collision, for nothing new or unexpected Avill happen to it, but all things have been foreseen. And what from everlasting hath been preordained for it, that it waiteth for with evenness of mind. - *from 'The Fiery Soliloquy with God', by Master Gerlac Petersen, Canon Regular of Deventer (a contemporary of Thomas a Kempis)*

Prologue to Part Two

I sing the Song of Songs; the Song of Love
Which Angels innocent may never sing.
I sing the Work of God - Emmanuel;
The Epic of the Love Divine, I sing.
  The Life of Jesus and His Mother; lo,
Jesus and Mary - God and the Creature, One.
I sing Redemption: Man had sinned, and Man
With Woman joined the Atonement makes: 'tis she
The Unfallen Child of Eve to whom God gave
The entity of that Conception, which
He willed His Own to make when time was not.
He clothes Him with her flesh; in her unites
By Hypostatic Union, God with Man -
The creature with the Uncreated: lo,
His Will is hers - her life is His - thus joined,
No force in time, nor in eternity
May them dissever.
    Thus it is they go
Through life together, and the penalty
Pay of our Parent's forfeiture. By His
Alone Most Precious Blood, we rise redeemed.
His Passion works our cure: but, by His Side
The Woman stands, compassionate and torn.

Thus teacheth Holy Church: Redeemer He:
And she - the Co-Redemptrix of the Race.

And with this cheer of mirth and joy our Good Lord looked down on the right side, and brought to my mind where our Lady stood in the time of His Passion and said, 'Wilt thou see her?' - as if He had said: 'I wot well that thou wilt see My Beloved Mother; for after Myself she is the highest joy that I might show thee, and most liking and worship to Me, and most is she desired to be seen of all My beloved creatures.'

And our Lady Mary He shewed me three times: the first was as she was conceived; the second as she was in her sorrow under the Cross; and the third was as she is now, in liking, worship, and joy.

- *'Revelations of Divine Love', Mother Juliana of Norwich, edited by Father H. Collins, O.Cist.*

Obedience and Humility

At length the dolorous time is come when she
With fortitude must face the destiny
Which, in her Son, must now accomplished be.
Saint Joseph is at rest; and home will be
No longer home-like. Gently sorroweth she.

Lady, thy sorrows thicken: yet, oh see,
One joy is thine which no one shares with thee,
O Mother of the Saviour. 'Tis for thee
With Him to bear the burthen: 'tis for thee
Alone to know and share His destiny.

Thou art the Woman; but the Man is He
On whom the judgment falls; and heavily
By Him all justice will accomplished be.
Yet with Him, thou the Wine-press, verily
Wilt tread unto the end, unwearyingly.

Little by little Jesus tutoreth thee;
And as thy light grows stronger, strengtheneth thee.
Thou shrinkest from no suffering. Valiantly
Thy Virgin-spirit aids Maternity,
And Nature owns no law but Grace in thee.

All Grace before thine eyes would present be
In that Most Holy One - supporting thee,
Perfection of Obedience; as to thee
Himself was subject, so He seeks of thee
The same subjection to the Law's decree.

That Law of Life, Obedience is: for he
Alone the Tree of Life can taste, and be
Eternally with God, whose will shall be

In perfect, free and full conformity
With His - Father of Immortality.

Adam and Eve had disobeyed: the Tree
Of Knowledge taught our Parents, verily,
That disobedience darkens, gradually
Obscures the Light of Grace; that only he
Who doth the Will of God, in Light can be.

Eternal Wisdom and Obedience

Mother of Light and Immortality,
How didst thou reach the gate of Heaven, whereby
Salvation thou hast brought us. . .? Verily,
Twas by Obedience. Yes, alone to be
For God was thy self-chosen destiny.

Eternal Wisdom, from the Father He
Came forth One God, One Will, One Entity.
His Manhood so indwelt with Deity,
That in Him nothing could be found to be
At variance with that Sovereign Unity.

And Wisdom framed Himself a House; and He
Therein enclosed seven beauteous Shafts which He
O'erlaid with gold, and made them fair and free,
Secure from storm - O Virgin, thou wert she,
This Counterpart of His Humanity.

Thou wert the Rock-built House; and in it He
Found shelter and companionship with thee.
Himself the Image of the Father, He
Found the Reflection of Himself in thee,
Obedient unto death prepared to be.

Yet thou wert human only: not in thee
Was aught thine own of pure Divinity.
Yet must the work of sovereign Sympathy
With that Divine, dear Son ship, truly be
The free-will offering of thine entity.

What an Obedience - Woman though thou be -
To trample down susceptibility;
To supernaturalize Maternity;

The weakness of thy state to know, yet be
O'ertaken never by infirmity.

O tenderest of Women: thou to be
The Priestess at the Sacrifice? to be
Fit to endure unhesitatingly
What never woman dared? Oh, verily,
Obedience trained thy will - the Strength gave He.

The Will of God

How slow to learn this sacred truth are we,
That happiness lies in conformity
Of will to some superior; and that he
Who owns no will - nor other guide hath he
But love of self - knows no felicity.

This is Creation's law. Oh, look and see
The starry skies, where all obediently
Move round their central orbs, and be
Each and with all a perfect galaxy
Of order, clothed with light, resplendently.

Look round upon the earth. The seasons be
The servants of the Lord obediently.
Matter, so dull and heavy, cannot be
Out of the circle of that harmony
Where all in order moves, mysteriously.

The laws of order and obedience be
The brute creation's instinct, verily -
How its intelligence unfailingly
Fits into God's designs, which ever be
The witnesses of His Benignity.

One Word of His sufficeth. Verily,
From the beginning, herb and flower and tree
Never have failed their lawful destiny.
They have no will: God's Will for them shall be
Circumference and centre, changelessly.

Such is the Law of Nature. God can be
Alone its centre. God alone can be
The Creature's full perfection. Hath not He

The means to that perfection graciously
Placed in our hearts? Him to serve - willfully?

Our will is ours - to be, or not to be
The heirs of Life. No servile slaves are we,
But free-born children. Heirs of Heaven we be;
Yet on this one condition - reverently
To learn and do God's Will unceasingly.

Self-Will

God's Will had been deposed: the Enemy
Our grand prerogative had lured, to be
A weapon of destruction: yea, would he
The law designed for man's perfection see
Wrested - the world to fill with anarchy.

Self-will, self-love, and self-complacency
Now take the place of Heavenly Charity.
The ladder given for reaching Heaven will be
A downward slope to Hell. Yea, verily,
Such was his end in man's delinquency.

The law of natural obedience - see -
Deformed, debased to human slavery;
And in its place, his grand free-will shall be
A coil of chains, in which man sits with glee,
Lost to the sense of its indignity.

If man shall be redeemed, not only He
Who Man's Redeemer is, the penalty
Of insubordination, wilfully
Must undertake, but also, He
Must Nature reassert and set it free.

For Human Nature, made with God to be
Immortally conjoined, should stedfastly
The purpose follow of her entity:
Her splendid will, released from vanity,
To God's High Will subordinate should be.

For earthly goods she may not pine, nor be
Enamoured of the creature: God will be
Her centre and circumference - must be

Her longing, night and day. Nor thirst may she,
For aught but Him in all to serve - to see.

Such was the Life of Jesus. Verily,
The Father's Will, His Rule of Life would be;
His meat and drink it was . . . and so hath He,
O Mother-Priestess, tutored thee to be
Obedient unto dying, willingly.

Man and Woman

Mirror of Justice, lo, we find in thee
Woman restored to her lost dignity.
The Second Adam willeth not to be
Without acknowledged Help-mate: verily,
Justice fulfilling, hath He chosen thee.

As in their nature lies equality
'Twixt Man and Woman, so He found in thee,
As Man, His Nature's equal; for we see -
Although in nature Woman - thou couldst be
Heroic in thine acts' sublimity.

For Him indeed was no necessity -
But all things as is fittest. He would be
As Man, a Man - since Man He deigned to be:
And thou, the Second Eve, by dignity
Must needs be fit to share His destiny.

If thou wert fit, 'twas He who fitted thee,
O Mother, Full of Grace and Sympathy:
If fair, in beauty He created thee;
If wise and prudent, 'twas His piety
That graced His Mother with her dignity.

If Woman is the compliment to be
Of Man in His creation, then must she
Of Woman's grace in nothing wanting be:
Rather, she brings him as her dowery
That which is lacking to his entity.

In God the Father (speak we reverently)
All is, that constitutes Humanity:
The Father's strength and worth and dignity;

The Mother's sweetness and benignity -
O God, our Father, Mother, Both is He.

But in created being, lo, we see
Divided are these graces equally
'Twixt Man and Woman: so equality
Of nature be acknowledged, and may be
In all its acts concerted, harmony.

Woman Dethroned

Oh, what an untold loss for Man, when she,
His one companion, lost the dignity
Conferred on Woman. Age on age will she
Suffer that loss; and through that loss will be
The slave of one whose mistress she should be.

So Man, whose intellect and powers still free
To muse on God and Immortality,
Learned to be lonely; and to find that she
No longer had the power, or wish to be
The sharer of his inner sanctuary.

Immersed in petty cares and miseries, she
No longer found, nor sought his sympathy.
The Woman was a chattel: she might be
Graced as you will; but oh, despised was she
For some unknown inferiority.

Her soul no longer cultivated, she
Declined from natural nobility:
The beauty of her person, verily,
Became a mere seducer: thus did she
Eve's footsteps follow, all unwittingly.

Oh, if to fallen Man the fall would be
So fatal as to alter destiny,
Poor fallen Woman, what a curse would be
Her lot, fighting at once with slavery
And with the sense of innate dignity.

Yet through the darkest ages, verily,
Woman retains her graces. Let her be
Contemned, despised, abandoned; yet will she

The dictates follow of her heart, and be
Faithful to death in his extremity.

Selfless and self-denying found to be,
E'en as an outcast from society;
Hopeful and helpful and long suffering she,
Ready to spend, or to be spent - so she
His Guardian Angel may acknowledged be.

Tyranny

Thus had the Woman been dethroned, when she
Had forfeited her Birth's-equality
And even Nature with the Man, to be
By him despised and treated shamefully,
As of another, lower race than he.

Perchance forgetful, or unknowing, he
Lost sight of his dethronement. Verily,
If Woman lost her Queenship, so did he
His wisdom's worth, his grand supremacy
Of intellect - his Kingdom's sovereignty.

But the great woe was this - that Unity
Of Nature lost its vital potency;
The spiritual tie was weakened. See,
Usurped her throne the fleshly tendency,
And lorded over Nature's dignity,

And Nature's self was sick and like to die
When Nature, threefold, lost simplicity.
When God's fair Image was obscured, to be
Exchanged for Sin's foul image, gradually
Flesh o'er the Spirit gained the mastery.

Not so the Brute-creation; for they be
Unfallen from their natural destiny.
In brutes, inordinate can nothing be
Who follow Nature's laws unconsciously,
And thus, God's everlasting Will obey.

But with the Gifts of Reason, powers that be
Conferred to aid Man in his destiny,
And raise him to that eminent degree

Of worship and unchallenged sovereignty
Which God designed his lasting lot to be;

Man found fierce weapons in his hands, when he
The end distorted of his primacy;
When virtues lost their influence to be
By pride converted into passions- he
Became the tyrant; reigned by tyranny.

Disorder Creates Law

O Mother Eve, in reason wouldst thou be
Afflicted and despairing, when, to thee
Of Nature's Order shaken, constantly
Fresh tales from Earth of grief and misery
By Souls were brought to Limbo - woe to thee.

The centre of her Orbit lost: oh, see,
Her parts will disintegrate. Anarchy,
The Dragon's tool, all uncontrolled will be
And march throughout the earth triumphantly;
While Order from her throne hurled down will be-

Such were the fruits of thy delinquency,
O Nature, when the Flood o'erwhelmed thee.
Then, one alone of all thy family
Was found by God to stand. Alone was he
Faithful in his inflexibility.

And when again the race spread mightily
And peopled nations, and prosperity
Smiled on thy children - then it was that He
Whom thou hadst left, returned and looked for thee
And for His Name's sake chose one family.

God then did raise in Sion that fair Tree
Which grew and prospered; and posterity
Called on the God of Abraham, teaching thee,
O Nature, what the Natural Law must be
Writ in each soul of Adam's progeny.

So did the Word of God most mightily
Speak through His wonders. He appointed thee,
O Israel, Guardian of the Mystery

'Twixt God and Man. The Promise gave He thee,.
By which our Nature's rights restored should be.

But ere a Promise of redemption be
By Nature realized, she fain must be
Of sin convicted - know her slavery. .
So came the Law from Sinai. Then did she
The lesson learn of her impurity.

Light in Darkness

Amid the universal darkness, see,
That Lamp is lighted which will never be
Extinguished through all ages. Wondrously
The nation taketh root, and there we see
Th' unbending reign of a Theocracy.

God reigns in Sion. There Almightily
Pent up, His wealth of Love unceasingly
Streams upon Israel; waiting patiently
Until the hour when It victoriously
The earth shall cover as the floods the sea.

Crieth the Prophet-Seer: 'Oh, verily,
Shall darkness clothe the earth: a mist shall be
Upon the eyes of peoples. Though they be
Far off and strangers, yet they turn to thee,
And in thy Light Jerusalem shall see.'

For Nature pined for God. Impatiently
Wore she the chains of infidelity.
The light of conscience never failed, yet she
Was manacled and martyred, as to be
Half strangled in her birth's captivity.

E'en in the Land of Promise, verily,
The Light was half obscured. To us who see
In the full blaze of daylight, what can be
More clear and comprehensive utterly,
Than those bright beams of ardent prophecy?

Himself, God reigns in Sion. There is He
Adored and glorified, content to be
Alone acknowledged God: while patiently

That stubborn Nature welding which shall be
United to His Own, eternally.

O Mother of the Word, That was for thee
The Light that led thee on unconsciously -
Thy Soul herself was Light: thine eye could see
Through the perfection of its purity;
And He who spake through Prophets, spake to thee.

Homeless

The Sun is in the heavens. Arise and see,
O Land of Zabulon and Nepthali,
O favoured Jordan, Sea of Galilee,
Ye peoples that in darkness sit - oh, see,
Before that glorious Light Death's shadows flee.

Darkness and Night are over past: for He
Who is the Light of Life, hath come to be
The Light of all the World; hath come to be
The New Creation's Founder. Verily,
The Death-destroying Angel shall He be.

* * *

Mother of our Redemption: lo, for thee
Whose Home alone was Jesus, it would be
A trial wondrous for maternity
When, as the time drew nigh, He turned to thee.
And as His wont, sweet counsel took of thee.

* * *

In that still Home of sacred unity
Where, interwoven, Soul with soul would be,
The understanding had small need to be
By many words expressed; and thus would He
Her soul advise in each necessity.

Then, as a Woman of high purpose, she
His meaning would endorse; nor would she be
By look, or thought a hindrance: valiantly
From first to last would follow God's decree
And with Him share Redemption's penalty.

As Adam quitted Paradise when he
Wandered at large to find sin's destiny -
Eve following in tears: so now would He
Their Home forsaking, homeless, houseless, be
Without a shelter, steeped in poverty -

While Mary followed meekly: yet, would she
See from a distance how Divinity
Wrought with His wonderful Humanity;
Silently worshipping, while studiously
Keeping due watch o'er each necessity.

The Valiant Woman

Mother of that Divine Humanity,
Stedfast of purpose - now begins for thee
A Life of pure Compassion. Secretly,
Thou in thy bosom bearest what must be
The sharpest pain for pure Maternity.

'Twas thine own will - immersed in God's decree-
To leave thy still retreat in Galilee.
The Mother's nature could not brook to be
In peace and safety, while alone wrought He
The work of Man's Redemption, painfully.

But Mother's Nature not alone would be
The motive force of this fidelity:
Though none perchance so capable would be
To rise above itself, and valiantly
The burthen bear prepared for Him and thee.

Thus is it, seeming miracles may be
By Grace in Nature wrought. In verity,
Doth God His Way prepare most dexterously
Through Human Nature, when her cure shall be
The purpose of Eternal Clemency.

And what is now His Purpose? Verily,
The restoration of Humanity;
Of that Creation so beloved, that He
Designed it for Himself eternally -
And in which Order He hath moulded thee.

Thou art the Valiant Woman. Prophecy
In thee had seen a perfect entity.
No Miracle was it enabling thee

To follow Him throughout courageously:
But Nature born again, re-formed in thee.

Apart wert thou from others: yet, we see
How Mary and Salome stayed by thee
Through those three years of wandering. Verily,
Two ministering Angels they, to thee -
Those faithful Women out of Galilee.

Contemplation

O Sacred Virgin, known were they to thee,
His times and seasons. Forth He went from thee
To Jordan's stream by John baptised to be,
And thus fulfill all Justice; there, to be
With Power proclaimed the Son of God, was He.

Then were the Heavens first opened visibly,
And as a Dove the Holy Ghost saw He
Coming, descending on Him from on high:
When lo, the Voice Eternal, audibly
Gave utterance to thy Son's Divinity.

Oh, who, conceiving thus the verity
Of God-made-Flesh in Mary - seeing why
With His her life was joined (that all might be
The just accomplishment of God's decree)
Would doubt her presence at the Mystery?

Not in the flesh, but in her privacy
Where He had left her for the time, would she -
Who was in soul united utterly
To Him in all things - rapt in ecstasy,
The glory of her Son in vision see.

'Twould be her prayer, if prayer were needed, He
Would thus her soul enlighten: so that He
Would never for a moment sundered be
From her His chosen Help-mate; and that she
Co-ordinate with Him might ever be.

Retired in prayer - as she was wont to be
From childhood upwards - to the Father she
Would turn for consolation; ask to be

Found faithful; and in all, obediently
To suffer with her Son, unceasingly.

Thus would she His dear Footsteps follow; see
Him in the desert wand'ring. Thus would she
The Vision of Temptation share. Twould be
Dream-like, yet clear before her Soul; and she
The Foe would recognize - unshrinkingly.

Union

Oh what, Great Virgin, would it be to thee
To move among the multitude? to be
Amidst a crowd alone? Thy place would be
Before the Father's Throne. There, verily,
Art thou, O Woman, Heaven's choicest Hierarchy.

Twas not maternity that prompted thee
To leave thy sheltered home in Galilee
The Footsteps of thy Son to follow; see,
Thou His Disciple wert - thy God was He:
And God Incarnate whispered: * Follow Me.'

Thy Soul was steeped in His Divinity,
As His was formed in thy humanity:
Thou couldst not choose but follow, had not He
At times repressed the impulse, leaving thee
In body lonely, but in spirit free.

All-brightness of the Father's Glory, He,
Himself reflected would be found in thee:
The Beatific Vision ceaselessly
Before His Sacred Soul - then sure, for thee
The Vision clear of His Humanity.

Nor yet for consolation would this be
Thy sweet prerogative: but, verily,
Since Nature two-fold perfected must be
By two-fold work in sovereign unity,
Such would the law of that great union be

In all, 'Immaculate Conception' see.
And naught can fail of that great dignity
Belonging to the bond which welded thee,

O Virgin Mother, in His Destiny.
That made thee One with Him- Him One with thee.

One single Purpose reigned for Him and thee.
And for this purpose thou wouldst wilfully
With Him a perfect full Oblation be:
With Him wouldst bear all suffering stedfastly,
Ne'er looking back 'till life's extremity.

Mother of God

O Mother, Full of Grace and Sanctity;
How shall I dare that Grace to testify
With lips unclean? How may I speak of thee,
Nor derogate from thy great dignity
By words unsuited to thy majesty?

Mother of Jesus, ah, thou knowest why
I seek to gather from each Mystery
Some flower to form a chaplet that may be
An offering of pure love. I come to thee;
Nor do I fear that thou wilt turn from me.

For who might dare to raise his thoughts on high,
Or contemplate that Sovereign Charity
In whom thou art enclosed mysteriously;
Or muse on God's Eternal Entity
If we, O Mother, dare not dream of thee?

Yet, if I dream, the dream must certainly
Be less than thy deserving: for to be
Equal to that, the soul herself must be
Rapt in the light of holy ecstasy -
Such have thy children been who looked on thee.

Mother art thou of God's Humanity,
And as His Human Flesh assumed would be
Into the Substance of Divinity,
He in the Flesh is God, and thou wouldst be
Mother of God Incarnate, verily.

And God Himself no greater dignity
Upon a creature can confer: then see,
If in my musings I dishonour thee,

'Twill not by overstrained surmises be,
But want of power for comprehending thee.

Yea, Saints have said, who knowledge had of thee:
'United more to God thou couldst not be
Without thyself becoming God.' Oh, see,
Who may explain such sovereign Mystery?
Or give thee more than God hath given to thee?

Woman's Strength

Mother of God hath He created thee,
The Sovereign Ruler of His Infancy,
Guide of His Adolescence; yea, to be
His only Mistress, 'till such hour as He
Will enter on His Earthly Ministry.

The hour is come. No less He honours thee;
Not less art thou His Help-mate; verily,
Though times and seasons change, and thou wilt be
Hidden awhile in some obscurity,
Since work Divine is His, apart from thee -

Apart in seeming only - it must be
The Woman's lot to labour secretly,
Yet no less helpful through the unity
She brings into the human family;
The Man in public works - in private, she.

Her influence no less is certainly
The spring of hidden strength and grace, which she
Doth chiefly exercise unconsciously.
The more her virtue waxeth secretly
The more she addeth to life's dignity.

This was a grace restored to us when she,
The Mother of her Lord, was given to be
The Model of her sex - was given to be
The Light of Graces Feminine, that we
Our Nature's grand prerogatives might see.

So, in thy secret chamber thou wouldst be
The Patient Woman, teaching us how we
May surely rise in grace and strength, when we

Contented are in our obscurity,
Nor seek to shine outside our destiny.

Thus will the Woman find, inherently,
Her strength to grow in hiding: yet, is she
With Man on equal terms, whose 'rights' will be
Most manifested by simplicity,
And best secured by true humility.

The Marriage Feast, No. I

The Marriage Feast is spread; and lo, we see
The Lord of Heaven will bless it, courteously.
And Heaven's dear Queen is called upon to be
An Intercessor with her Son, that she
May be acknowledged such, eternally.

Not openly before the guests; but she,
Whose tender heart and ready sympathy
Perceive at once the Bridegroom's poverty,
And conscious that her Son would willingly
His mighty aid afford - yet wondrously

Waits for the asking - therefore, secretly
And heard by Him alone, with modesty,
Knowing His Will and Ways - thus prayeth she
In accents humble, yet entreatingly:
'They have no wine.' Tis all she saith. And He

Briefly replieth - as though seemingly
The prayer implied unheeding - answereth He:
'O Woman, what is this to Me and thee?'
Why holds He back? Hath He less sympathy
In all our little joys and woes, than she?

No: rather may we learn that even He
Delighteth in our importunity;
Delighteth in our faith, whenever we
Kneel at His Mercy-seat undoubtingly,
Sure of His Love and tender Sympathy.

The Canaanitish Woman, verily,
Might deem Him hard; and yet, in verity,
He did but kindle ardour, constancy

And faith unwavering, when before Him she
Poured forth her prayer, her daughter to set free.

Yet in each case, the Saviour willingly
The supplication entertained; and He,
Whom best His Mother understood, would be
As certain of complying, as that she
Could act in nothing unadvisedly.

The Marriage Feast, No. II

O Mother of my Saviour, should I see
Aught which is not thy teaching, let me be
Unable to express it. Verily,
All that is done by Jesus, here with thee,
Full seems to me of grace and harmony.

'Mine hour is not yet come.' So addeth He,
As though to deepen thy perplexity.
How couldst thou be perplexed, or will what He
Himself willed not? Thou knewest, verily,
His times were sacred, both for Him and thee.

Oh, was it not for future ages, He
Declared the work of thy Maternity,
And the Obedience which He owed to thee,
A little while suspended? Yet would He,
Even as God, no prayer refuse to thee.

Oh, as I venture, Mother, thus to be
The expounder of this gentle Mystery,
Forgive, should I mistake, and if I see
Reproof from Him could never fall on thee
With whom He wrought in union, ceaselessly.

'Woman:' behold thy title. It was He,
The Man, who first conferred it. Thou art she,
The One appointed of our Race to be
The Second Mother; yea, in truth wilt be
The Woman who shall crush the Enemy.

As God He answers thee: for now must He
By miracles assert His Deity.
Thus will the Mother of His Manhood be

Unrecognized in works of pure Divinity:
Thou art the creature - the Creator, He.

Thus teacheth He His Church. But thou wilt be
As Mother by Him recognized, when He
Goes forth to suffer: then wilt thou and He -
The Undivided Man and Woman - be
The Conquerors of Death on Calvary.

The Marriage Feast, No. III

Mother of sweet Compassion; lo, in thee
We find the secret of this Mystery:
He knew His Mother, and was known by thee.
Thy will and ways with His, would ever be
In perfect and in just conformity.

'They have no wine.' Oh, what simplicity,
What reverend faith, what graceful modesty,
Adorn those words of Mary. Verily,
The words of her He loved so tenderly
As sweetest music they to Him would be.

'Twas not to claim a Miracle that she
Sought Him in private, but His Will to see.
She knew His power; that He approached would
Not as her Son, but as her God. So He
As God replied to her anxiety.

Her prayer is unexpressed. Oh, see,
How prayer should rise before that Majesty
Who reads the heart itself. For answer, He
No token seems to give; yet, verily,
She knows her wish untold fulfilled shall be.

What more is needed? Yes, 'tis needed, she
All human help should tender; secretly
The servants she instructs that, readily
And without hesitation, they obey
His least Commands - and thus prepares His way.

Thus is her intercession perfect. She
Hath stood before her Son as God: and He
Who is her Son, bows down; yea, graciously

Changes the purpose of His own Decree,
That she all ages through may honoured be.

Stands thus the Mother of our Lord: for she
Hath never lost that sweet authority
Which, at the Bridal Feast, was seen to be
Acknowledged by her God. Oh, then may we
Her aid expect in each extremity.

The Marriage Feast, No. IV

Yet one instruction more is there that we
May gain, o'erpondering this Mystery.
He knows our wants, that we His children be;
That we are helpless, steeped in misery,
And into danger driven unconsciously.

Before His very Eyes are we: yet He
No notice seems to take, while we
All in the dark go on regardlessly,
While prayer alone can aid obtain; can be
The unfailing ladder to His Clemency.

Millions on millions moving helplessly
Dwell in the circle of humanity;
And yet for all, must Power Almighty be
Approached by human elements, ere we
May come in touch with His Divinity.

Lo, when upon the Galilean Sea
His toiling creatures wrought in vain, while He
Upon the pillow slept, how instantly
Their cry for aid was answered: yet would He
One act of faith have answered equally.

Our wants are Heaven-made ladders, whereby we
By faith and unremitting prayer may be
By Him accepted. Left alone, ah see,
How soon His loving Care forgot may be,
And lost the sense of our infirmity.

Yet labour must we as we may, that He
Our labour's toil may bless; the while should we
Pray instantly, since labour vain would be

Without Almighty Aid. Ah, verily,
A miracle of Love Divine are we.

But, who shall intercede for those who be
Unconscious of their woe-wrought destiny?
Who may the malice of the Enemy
For such avert? and Christ's Benignity
Secure? Mother of Jesus, thou art she.

The Sword

Dear Mother of the Saviour, lo, to thee
I turn, too conscious of infirmity:
For who can contemplate with tearless eye,
Or unconcern, the grievous destiny
Through life awaiting God's Own Son, and thee.

O Mother, overwhelmed I look on thee
Who - all absorbed in that grand Life, to be
Self-offered truly, an Oblation free,
In sacrifice for our iniquity -
Followed His every Footstep, secretly.

Who can, unmoved, that Gracious Presence see
Of such surpassing, sweet simplicity,
A Pilgrim on the plains of Galilee -
Each burthen lightening of mortality,
Each rudeness bearing of hostility?

Lo, what a Sword of Grief awaited thee
When, in the Holy Spirit's power, did He
Return from Jordan into Galilee,
To Nazareth thy Home - whence He would be
Expelled, with anger and with contumely.

O Mother, seen and heard hadst thou, how He
Had wrought among the people wondrously.
The sick were healed, the blind were made to see,
The lepers cleansed, the dead upraised, and He
All hearts had won through lowly Galilee.

But here, oh, what a Word of Grace had He
In power outpoured upon them. Here had He
The Prophet's Word divulged, and taught that He

The Lord's Anointed was, and sent to be
Their Teacher and their Healer, verily.

Ah, Nazareth, His Childhood's home would be
The first to disregard the Deity
Who in Him wrought, and never more would He
Appear amongst them; never more would be
In Nazareth heard that Voice of Majesty.

Ill Success

These were the signs of His Divinity
Which, for thy Office, daily strengthened thee,
O Mother of the Healer. Thou must be
Calm amidst all; not knowing all that He
Shall undergo; but waiting patiently.

To Him Who all things knew, could nothing be
Strange, unexpected: to Him, destiny,
With every slight detail, was vividly
And altogether Present: still would He
Rapt in the Vision Beatific be.

But, to His Human Soul, which learned as we
By each experience, every crime would be
A fresh-made wound of sorrow: yet, as He
Was come to be a Healer, so willed He
Those Sacred Wounds sin's wounds should remedy.

The illusive hope that smiles like victory,
For Him no Balm of Gilead could be -
He taught and fed the multitudes, while He
Well knew their fickleness - that few would be
The better for His patient Charity.

The wonders of His Healing, mightily
Were echoed round the Lake of Galilee:
For in Capharnaum and Nepthali
Wrought He in public, that His work might be
The expounder of the Divine Benignity.

Yet in the midst of benefactions, see,
Crieth His Soul: 'Capharnaum, woe to thee:
For had the mighty works here done in thee

Been wrought in Sodom, then, oh, verily,
Had they in ashes mourned and turned to Me.'

All the disgrace of sin's malignity,
Ingratitude and hardness, suffered He -
Yet rose above the suffering: so to thee,
His Virgin Mother, 'twould be given to be
In disappointment stedfast, calm as He.

Unbelief and Blasphemy

Mother most Patient, hard it was for thee
Unmoved to live amid uncertainty:
As higher clomb thy Soul, more deep would be
Its power intense of suffering, to see
The Son of God a prey to calumny.

Thy brethren lead the way; in Him they see
As yet the Son of Joseph; thou must be
O Mother, silent on that Mystery.
The people throng; fresh wonders worketh He
In His great Might - yet ever-blind they be.

The Servant of the people: tenderly
Heals He their sicknesses: they press to be
Touched by His Garments only. So will He
The poor demoniacs from their torments free -
The very Devils owning God is He.

Clamour the people. They are, verily,
Blind with excitement; refuge seeketh He
With His new-made Apostles. See, they be
In their retreat besieged. They cannot flee,
Even for needful sustenance. So He

Remains in peace. The Father's Will must be
His Lode-star ever. But His Brethren He
Heareth exclaiming: 'He is mad. Oh, see,
This must we stop' - and unadvisedly,
Haste they from thence to stay Him forcibly.

Scribes from Jerusalem are there. They see
With scorn the multitude. 'Not mad is He,
But by a Devil led; in verity,

The spirit of Beelzebub hath He' -
Thus leadeth unbelief to blasphemy.

The clamours of the people and the cry
Of these blasphemers, reach the sanctuary
Where Mary prayeth. Full of grief doth she
Her kinsfolk follow; how could she foresee
And not prevent a deed of blasphemy?

The Kinsfolk of Jesus

The Twelve are round Him. Thus discourseth He
Teaching the people. 'Lo, how can it be,
Satan should cast out Satan? Were not he
Thenceforth divided? So that fatally,
As a riven house must fall, so fall would he.

'He that the house would enter, must not he
First bind the Strong Man that shall plundered be?
He who the Strong can bind alone is He
Who may the same cast out. Yea, verily,
He who will Satan bind must stronger be.

'All sin, I say, shall be forgiven: yea,
And many a sin of very blasphemy
Shall unto untaught men forgiven be:
But, who blasphemes God's Holy Spirit, he
Ne'er shall forgiveness find, eternally.'

'And such indeed was that dread blasphemy: '
Thus addeth the Evangelist; for see,
Whom they blasphemed, the Holy Ghost was He
Who filled the Soul of Jesus gloriously,
And wrought those deeds of pure Divinity.

The Son of Man Himself, in truth, might be
Dishonoured and despised; lo, therefore He
Was come to do the Father's Will, and be
Rejected, scorned, reviled: but verily,
Not so the Spirit may dishonoured be.

Then was it rumoured, at the door might be
His Kinsmen with His Mother. Well knew He
Their purpose, and her sweet anxiety.

To Him report the people: 'Verily,
Thy Mother and Thy Brethren seek for Thee.'

Them answereth He in all serenity,
Made milder for His late severity:
'Who be My Mother and My Kinsfolk? - See,
Alone who doth My Father's Will, is he
That may My Mother, Brother, Sister be.

The Law of the Kingdom

O Mary, Full of Grace, thus doubly thee
Would He acknowledge, who wert bound to be
The only Blossom of our earthly Tree,
Whose bosom Him had borne; whose Fruit was
Through thy Obedience; lo, He owneth thee -

Thee, above Women blest: for, verily,
Great as the virtue which in her would be
Who should the Word of God conceive, yet He
Owned her for this, that by obedience, she
Fulfilled His Father's ever-loved decree.

And those who round Him sate, undoubtedly
On them He looked with love; for well did He
Their faith foreknow, and their fidelity,
Their patience and their dauntless energy,
Obedience, martyrdom and victory.

The Creature, unreservedly, saith He,
Obedient and subordinate should be;
Since, for beatitude, Man's entity
Ought, with the Uncreated Entity
Of God, in voluntary union be.

And thus, with care embracing, verily,
All the loved Children of His Kingdom, He
Points out the secret of that Family
Which He hath come to found; that we
By our obedience may acknowledged be.

How on thine eye and ear fell restfully
His Form and Language, Mary, wert thou by
That Word to hear, that blessed Face to see:

And if, perchance, He turned to look on thee,
What pure content for thy humility.

Lowliest of Women; oh, how faithfully
Thy Soul reflects the hidden mystery
Of Nature's best perfections. Lo, in thee
Shineth that grace of perfect sympathy
With Man, which in the Woman's breast should be.

Womanhood

O Perfect Woman, what a joy to me
To be a Woman, and to stand by thee
As one of thine own sex. For lo, I see
The Perfect Creature thou alone mayst be
Of all within the human family:

For thou art only Woman. Perfectly
Art thou the Glass of Womanhood: in thee
All that is sweet in our humanity,
All that is gracious out of Deity,
All that is faithful, noble, pure, we see.

Mary, we do not look for aught in thee
Beyond the scope of Womanhood. In thee,
Woman's vocation all complete we see.
The Perfect Mother; also, perfectly
The type of Help-mate we shall find in thee.

But oh, how speak of this? For was not He
More than a Man through His Divinity?
Perfect in Manhood, perfect Godhead, see
A Body and a Soul in sympathy,
United in a Person of the Deity?

Such is the Man; the Man who willed to be
The New Creation in Humanity.
Such was the Man, O Woman, who with thee
Made up the Mirror of our entity -
Thou the Companion; but the Master, He.

The Way He leads, but not unwilled by thee -
A Way of sorrow and of mystery;
A Way in which He moveth fearlessly,

Thou by His side, whose tender sympathy
Surmounteth pain and sorrow, prayerfully.

As Man He works, and in Him Deity
Must lay aside its awful Majesty,
Must seem to slumber; for in Him shall be,
As Man, the force to conquer destiny -
And Man, the work to perfect, needeth thee.

The Victims

How can the Son of God be said to be
In need of aught? As Man alone can He
Fulfill all Justice; and as Man can He
Alone the wine-press tread of suffering. He
The debt must pay: what need hath He of thee?

Lo, hath the Son of God most perfectly
The Law fulfilled, and the sad destiny
Of fallen Man averted: willfully
For every crime, His Precious Blood would be,
Of broken Law, the boundless Penalty.

Yet, if for every child of Adam be
A share reserved as his own penalty,
A share in union with those sufferings, see,
How deep and wide the awful Mystery
Of God in Man - in dying Agony.

Man did not sin alone: and so will He
Not be alone in this great Mystery
Of retributive Justice, though 'twas He
Whose pure Obedience purchased victory -
Since Perfect Man and Perfect God was He.

The Law condign of Justice now will be
Shared by the Partner of Man's destiny:
The Perfect Woman therefore fearlessly
Assumes her right and takes her share to be
Co-partner in His woes, ineffably.

Adam and Eve this wondrous unity
In Human-kind foreshadowed: for not he
Alone might live, nor yet alone might be

Ripe in perfection, since paternity
Created was - a Dual-unity.

Fallen was the race when that great Unity
From its perfection drooped: nor would there be
A resurrection of the type, 'till He,
The Second Father of Mankind, should be,
With Perfect Woman joined, a Victim free.

The Silence of Mary

Most Reticent of Women, how may be
Expressed the grace of thy Humility?
Thy perfect Self-annihilation? See,
How in the Gospel narrative may be
Scarce found a clue to this identity.

The Public Life of Jesus following, we
Through changing scenes are led, but naught of thee
Transpires to draw the childlike soul to thee:
But silence, more than words doth tell of thee
In witness to thy word's fidelity.

The Secret of that Birth Divine, to thee
Alone confided; with what modesty
And self-renunciation do we see
Thy Grace revealed in that sweet Mystery;
How 'All for Jesus' would thy motto be.

The Word-made-Flesh it was, assuredly,
Who clothed thee with a Grace becoming thee;
For not till later years when John should be
To write inspired, would all the glory be
Of that Conception fully taught by thee.

Long years of intimate fidelity
Had taught the Loved Disciple that which he
Declared in Words majestic - like to thee -
Who, from the Word Himself, immediately,
Had learned the Secrets of this Mystery.

'From the Beginning was the Word; and He
The Word with God was found: in verity,
The Word was God; and lo, the Same is He

The World's Creator, and alone is He
The Life, who came Man's very life to be.

'Come is the Life; the Light of Light is He
That shone in darkness - ah, obscurity
That glory understood not' Would not he,
John, the Beloved Disciple, learn from thee
The fullness of that Word's Sublimity?

The Permission of Mary

Oh, surely thou didst know all truths that be
Enfolded in the heavenly Mystery,
By which thou wert enshrouded; doubtlessly
E'en in the hours of earliest infancy
Who would thy Soul illumine, if not He?

Lo, from the Twelve He did not hide how He
Would suffer unto death ingloriously.
Yet, to console those sorrowing Ones, did He
The veil a moment lift, when radiantly
On Thabor's height shone His Humanity.

Then say, O Virgin-Mother, could it be,
Through all those years of recollection, He
That glory transcendental, would not thee
In fitting seasons show advisedly?
And thus to scenes more hard encourage thee?

Before thy sunlit Soul in clarity
The picture of His Doom revealed would be;
That so, the sharer of His toil might see
The end of that sweet Life, in vision, which He
Had taken with thine own consent from thee.

Lo, He had asked permission Man to be;
And thou didst give it. Could it ever be
When came the hour that Life to offer, He
Should set aside such high Maternity,
Nor seek permission of the same from thee?

Lo, if the Mother that Humanity
Offers to God, is not Maternity
Doing her utmost? God's Paternity

May do no more than give His Son to die.
Oh, who dare fathom such grand Unity?

The Victim hast thou offered wittingly,
O tender Mother, and the hour draws nigh.
As Abraham with Isaac, thou wilt be
Called to Moriah's mount. But ah, for thee
That woeful Way must end on Calvary.

'Mulier Fortis'

We know not, Mother, how the call would be
That bade thee leave Capharnaum; if He
Himself thee summoned, or if, inwardly
His Spirit moved, who ever tenderly
Drew on thy soul to meet His destiny.

Lo, in thine inner chamber, fervently
Unto thy Heavenly Father wouldst thou pray
To keep thee in thy goings on the way
Which in obscurity before thee lay -
The steps of Jesus following, day by day.

The Paschal-feast approacheth. Thou and He
Must both attend this high Solemnity.
But to thy stedfast Heart what would it be,
The thought of finding Him, in verity,
Preparing for the End? Oh, woe is thee.

Yet, what a Crown for Womanhood. Oh, see
This Virgin Champion of Humanity
O'er Nature triumphing victoriously.
Lo, Full of Grace is thy Maternity,
'O Mulier, fortis in examine.'

And who would dream, to see thee passing by,
A two-edged Sword has pierced thee inwardly?
Who, understand the calm enabling thee
The burthen of suspended agony
Without a sign, to bear so patiently?

Not all unconscious wert thou of that cry
Raised by the Pharisees. The infamy
With which they dared asperse Him was to thee

Well known: their blindness and their jealousy
Ripening their projects to maturity.

Had not thy Spirit rapt in ecstasy
Beheld the Miracle in Bethany?
Gazed on the Tears of Jesus? Heard the Cry
Which woke the dead? - so all the world should see
The Resurrection and the Life was He.

The Tears of Mary

Now waitest thou, O Mary, patiently
Among thy kinsfolk come from Galilee;
So, as the days drag on, thy Heart may be
Prepared for all - retired, and wistfully
Watching the gathering tempest in the sky.

Oh, who may dare imagine thou wouldst be
Like us, weak, nervous Women? Yet, in thee
Thy bodily perfections sure would be
The cause of greater anguish far, than we
Can picture for its deep intensity.

The balance of thy Soul would truly be
The balance of thy powers corporeally.
As deepest waters flow most tranquilly,
So flowed the surface of thy entity -
Mother of Indefectibility.

Thy tears, like those of Jesus, could not be
The tears of weakness; rather, they would be
The welling-forth of Grace mysteriously
Connected with our sad humanity,
The outflow of Compassion, worthy thee.

But, tears have been thy portion copiously
In secret, day and night; for thou wouldst be
A Victim truly of Fidelity.
Not for thyself they flowed: in verity,
Woman's Sin-offering they were bound to be.

Oh, who may tell with what perfection, she,
Mother of Jesus, wept. Oh, agony:
Each separate wound that struck thy heart would be

An arrow from the shaft Divine; would be
With virtue fraught, still more ennobling thee.

Mother of holy Tears, oh, pour on me
The gift of tears for sin's malignity,
The gift of true compassion. Lo, I see
This burthen I myself have laid on thee;
And I of all, in this would follow thee.

Mary Magdalen

In humble expectation, hoveringly
Before thy door, that other Mary see,
Dearest of Penitents. Oh, hath not she
A burthen of sweet tidings, which will be
'A bundle dropping myrrh,' 'twixt Him and thee?

O Mother, Full of Grace; how tenderly
This Child of Grace thou drawest unto thee -
This antetype of souls restored. Surely
His Mission then began, when, graciously,
Hers from the Powers Infernal He set free.

Full many a soul He liberated - she
Alone is found with broken heart to be
Of Penitents the model; yea, to be
Selfless in self-abjection; most, when she
Most felt the burthen of sin's infamy.

Before the door of Mary's cell stands she:
Who, but the Mother of the Lord could be
So full for her of tender charity?
Who, like the Sinless, love the Sinner? See,
How Grace hath recreated Purity.

She whispers of her Son: she saith how He
Her part had taken at the Feast; when, see,
The Vase she brake, and precious Spikenard she
Upon His Head had poured. 'Yea; let her be.
Against My burial is it done,' said He.

For the Apostle, the Iscariot - she,
Had heard rebuking: 'For the poor,' said he,
'Should waste be spared but oh, how graciously

Answered the Lord: 'Always the poor have ye,
While Me ye have not always.' So spake He

Words of significance. But verily,
The Mother knew their meaning. Not so she
Who, kneeling at her feet, abundantly
Sweet tears was shedding. Sympathy
The Mother shows. The Sword strikes inwardly.

Hosanna

'Is this for me His token? Will it be
So soon accomplished?' inwardly saith she.
Then turns to Magdalen: when suddenly,
Cries as of loud 'Hosannas' passing by
Recall to her the ancient prophecy,

Then, lifting up her face in ecstasy:
'Fear not, O Sion's Daughter,' murmur'th she.
'Behold thy King. He cometh unto thee
Poor and despised, and riding graciously
Upon the ass's foal. Lo: this is He.'

Then, bursting on the air all clamorously:
'Hosanna: (cry the people) Blest be He
Who cometh in Jehovah's Name. Yea, be
The Kingdom blest of David. Verily,
This is the Prophet-King from Galilee.'

'Messias:' Magdalen exclaims: 'will He
Restore the throne of Solomon? Ah me,
What strange new joy is this: 'then, tenderly
Her hand the Mother takes, and silently,
Looks her reply: 'Not so, in verity.'

'Is He then not Messias?' . . . 'Truly He,
He and none other can Messias be.
He who the world hath made, yea, verily,
The world can make again. Messias, He
From the Beginning: lo, the Word is He.'

Hearkens the Magdalen with glistening eye:
'He is my God, my Lord. Oh, answer me,
Dear Mother of my Lord, how this may be?

When shall the Kingdom come, if this be He,
King David's Royal Son, in verity?'

'How is it that this King doth over thee
Reign as a Lord and Master? Mary, see,
Naught in the world - in Heaven or Hell- can be
The conqueror of such a King as He:
Such, and none other will His Kingdom be.'

The Words of Mary

How Mary's heart was touched. Who would not be
Entranced who loved thy Son? She looks to thee,
And clings, as to none other, unto thee;
It is because alone thou art to be
The Mother of the Hearts, whose King is He.

Few are that Mother's words. No word can be
More piercing in its swift lucidity.
She speaks of truths like Jesus: and as He
Speaks to the heart, and reason follows - she
Touches the springs of feeling, reasoningly.

The grace of intellect will ever be
In perfect souls subordinate, though free.
But Grace in Mary shone in powers that be
Most subtle in their force and energy.
Her knowledge was a Gift - the Giver, He.

She spoke of what she knew, and easily
Found words to mirror thought: large hearted, she
Could read the simple souls, and they would be
Drawn to the nobler mind unconsciously
For warmth and light and tender sympathy.

'Tis ever thus with perfect souls that be
Drawn to the inner Light of Sanctity:
And if such force of soul be proven, she,
Whom all perfections graced, must notably
Beyond all others most attractive be.

And Mary left her side entranced, that she
Should lift the veil of His Divinity
To her, poor Sinner. Never could she be

Forsaken, surely, now she knew that He
Would reign alone in Love's Benignity.

And thou, dear Mother, moving mournfully
Where Mary Cleophas watched over thee,
Whose sweet solicitudes thy Son with thee
Shared ever - simple, silent wouldst thou be,
Nor speak of sorrow unadvisedly.

Mary's Agony

And no one dares to speak; yet verily,
Hath it been noised abroad that He must die.
And Mary, thou remainest secretly
Shut in thine upper-chamber, there to be
In readiness. O Mother, woe is thee.

Thine eyes are dim with weeping: verily,
They treat as sacred thy heart's agony;
Nor do they speak of common things to thee.
Heart wrung, yet self-contained, thy Soul would be
Burning to seek the Father's clemency.

'O God, Thy Will be done. My Father, be
My strength and fortitude. I look to Thee
In mine affliction. Yet, oh, verily,
I would not suffer less so I may be
With Him the Offering for sin's penalty.

'To suffer and to die. Ah, could I be
Instead, the Victim of Thy Justice - be
The Outcast from my people, and by Thee
Condemned to every weight of misery.
But, if He die - oh, let Him die with me.

'My Father, oh, I thank Thee that through me
The Satisfaction comes - yea, goes - to Thee.
Let me not fail, nor falter. I would be
His one Companion to the end. Ah see,
With tears I give my Child, mine All, to Thee.

'Oh, look upon my sorrow: Father, see,
Was ever sorrow like to mine? Then be
Thou piteous, Father, unto Him and me.

Me hast thou chosen for His Mother. Be,
O Father, gracious in extremity.

'O God, so great in Anger, verily,
Must this Thine Only One-begotten, be
The Only One to bear sin's penalty?
Cannot the doom be altered? May not He
Thy Holy One be spared this infamy?'

The Vision of the Garden

'O God, my Father, if this may not be,
Behold Thine Hand-maid: be it, verily,
According to Thy Will. Yet grant to me
In all His pains and sufferings perfectly
To be united. Glory be to Thee.

'Oh, may Thy Loving-kindness stay by me,
And may Thy Presence overshadow me,
Through all the darkness that surroundeth me.
Let nothing daunt my soul, but may I be
Strong in Thy strength, O God, upholding me.'

* * *

The Mother ceases; and a yearning cry
Escapes her lips; for lo, in ecstasy
Opens the gloaming, and a radiancy
As of a rising moon athwart the sky
Reveals the Garden of Gethsemani.

There, in that height who kneels? Alas, 'tis He,
Her Son, her Jesus. And in Agony
He prays - that inner prayer hears she
Deep in her Soul unvoiced, yet pleadingly -
'My Father, let this Chalice pass from Me.'

Apart and sleeping lie th' Apostles three.
He speaks: 'Oh, where is your fidelity?
Can ye not watch one little hour with Me?
Watch ye and pray, lest ye surprised be,
And fall into temptation, heedlessly.'

Again He kneels; and once again prays He:
4 O God, my Father, let this Chalice be

Removed, if it be possible.' Ah me,
Those Drops of Blood down-trickling dreadfully
Too well attest His mortal Agony.

The hour goes by. Again He finds the Three
Asleep for sadness: and again prays He:
'Oh, if this Chalice may not pass from Me,
Thy Will not mine be done; and may that be
Which Thou hast willed in all Eternity.'

The Vision of the Judgment

Bathed in that agonizing Sweat, stands He
Once more before His followers: 'Rise,' saith He,
'Your sleep is past. Behold the enemy -
Behold the traitor. Now arise and be
Prepared, if so ye will, to stand by Me.'

The Vision changes. Lo, she sees how He
Receives the kiss: 'tis Judas surely; see,
Around Him gather soldiers. Verily,
His Hands they seek to touch, when suddenly,
Prostrate they fall - His Power Divine shows He.

'Whom seek ye?' saith the Master: 'I am He,
Jesus of Nazareth: then take ye Me.
Plainly I tell ye; Jesus, I am He.
Why halt ye trembling? What doth hinder ye? '
Thus speak those well known accents, fearlessly.

The Vision changes. All alone is He
Amongst those soldiers rude: for, cowardly,
Peter and John and James have fled: ah see,
They could not brook the danger, wherefore He
Had bid them watch and pray unceasingly.

The Vision changes. Now on Sion, see,
Before the Court of Caiaphas, stands He.
'Art Thou the Very Son of God?' - cries he,
High Priest in Council - 'I adjure Thee,
Swear by the Living God, if Thou be He.'

Unmoved by vehemence, all tranquilly,
Meekly replieth Jesus: 'I am He.
Cometh the day when, throned in clouds, shall ye

The Son of Man behold, triumphantly
Clothed in the Strength of God's great Majesty.'

Riseth the Prelate fiercely. 'Hearken ye.
Hath He not spoken utter blasphemy?
Hath He not made Him Son of God, to be
Messias called? What think ye? answer me.'
Reply the Elders: 'Worthy of death is He.'

Jew and Gentile

Still gazes Mary. Ah, what may that be?
What pains inflicted; what indignity;
What blows and bruises and revilings He
Bears from that scum of base humanity -
Fettered with chains, o'erwhelmed with blasphemy.

No one is near Him: no one dares to be
His friend, or His disciple. Verily,
Even as a Lamb before his shearers, He
Bows to the will of recreants. Ah, see
That Holy One abandoned, utterly.

Rapt in her woe-abandoned ecstasy
The Mother of Compassion stedfastly
Beholds her Son: while every mystery
Standeth in clear relief before her eye -
For her a separate wound of agony.

Deep in her understanding can she see
The causes of the picture. Verily,
Not for the Jew alone must Jesus die,
But for the Gentile too. Humanity
Is wholly lost. Behold the reason why.

The Vision changes. Herod, verily,
Should judge a prisoner from Galilee.
Behold the Purple Robe, the mockery,
The osier-sceptre. Oh, what more can be
Heaped on that Head Divine. Ah, woe is she.

She sees how Pilate wavers, and that he
Gains nothing by pusillanimity.
Throughout all time will he dishonoured be

For that dire Scourging. Oh, the Pure One see,
Covered with Blood and lashes. Woe is she.

Yet one more scene. The Vision changes. See,
Clothed with the Purple, crowned with Thorns is He,
Bearing the reed for Sceptre. 'Look, and see
Your King, O Jewish people. This is He -
Behold the Man.' No more. Ah, woe is me.

Via Crucis

The Vision passeth. Mary wakes: ah see,
Her body bathed in deadly agony,
Her senses veiled through inwrought sympathy;
When at the door in hurried accents, she
The Sister hears: 'Lo, John, he calleth thee.'

Stands the Beloved Disciple, anxiously
Intent: 'Fear not, O Cousin John,' saith she,
'Lo, I and Cleophas, we go with thee.'
'What sayest thou, O Mother?' gaspeth he.
'It is the law of Justice,' answereth she.

'Thou knowest all?' 'All know I, verily.
The Lamb of God is He that slain shall be;
Despised, rejected, spit upon; and He
For the transgression of mankind, will be
The Victim of the Altar - woe is me.'

Saith John: 'The people gather: they would be
The witness of His Suffering' - 'Then will we
Be near to comfort Him. Am I not she,
His chosen Mother? We will go that we
May share His portion, and His destiny.'

Thus roused from helpless, deep despondency,
The soul revives of that Disciple: she
Hath fired the springs of faith, that generously
Burned in that loving bosom. Thus is she
The Mother of his soul, ere yet had he

Been given her for a Son: and now is she
The leader of his steps to Calvary.
And weeping Magdalen will truly be

Close in attendance by, when she
Shall tread the Via Crucis, dolorously.

There at the Gate of Ephraim stands she
Where He must pass. Bowed 'neath the Cross moves He
Failing and weak and bloodstained. Verily,
Mighty her heart. Yet, mightier far must be
Her will that guides those steps on Calvary.

The Triumph of Failure

He comes, the Thorn-crowned King. His Throne doth He
Bear on His bruised limbs. Alone is He,
For of the people none are with Him. See,
On either side a recreant - wearily
Drag on the failing footsteps. Woe is me.

He knows that she is there: and tenderly
Looks in that tear-stained face: she, silently
Replies by one quick glance of sympathy -
Then joins and follows in the train, that she
May tread where He is treading. Woe is me.

Oh, passing every untold mystery
This Mystery of Godliness. Doth He
Who all the legions of the Enemy
Is bound to vanquish, unsuccessfully
Move to His Death thus ignominiously?

And hath He lived for this? For this was He
Incarnate in our flesh? Oh, can this be
An hour of triumph for the enemy?
Oh, who may deem this Son of Man is He
Who, bruised and man-forsaken, God can be?

Those horrid cries she hears, yet moveth she
With John and Magdalen unfalteringly.
She knows how He fulfills all prophecy,
And that from Him her strength proceeds. No cry
Escapes those bloodless lips. Ah, woe is me.

With wounds and all defilement, seeth she
That Holy Visage marred: yet oh, not she
May stop to cleanse it, but another, see,

Steps from her home, and kneeling, tenderly
Wipes from His Brow those signs of blasphemy.

And Mary looks her thanks all tearfully:
When, as Veronica retires, oh, see,
Imprinted is the Face Divine. Thus He
Through every age hath left a sign how He
Regards and honours Woman's fealty.

Calvary

High hath He prized compassion. It shall be
The link uniting Man and Woman. See,
How in the midst of all this obloquy
Turns He to them, acknowledging they be
The only hearts to show Him sympathy.

The Women all are faithful. Fearlessly
Him have they followed, weeping. Therefore He,
Responsive to their pity, pityingly
Would them prepare for that dire destiny
So soon to fall on Judah's progeny.

Turns to them sadly: 'Weep ye not for Me,
But for yourselves and children. Verily,
Cometh the day when, happy they will be
Who barren are and childless. Since ye see
What woe befalls the green and living Tree,

'What for the dry and barren will it be? '
The Mother understands the prophecy:
His sorrows are her sorrows: 'Grieveth He
That for this deed shall Israel scattered be?
Oh, then in vain for Judah dieth He.'

The height is gained at length of Calvary:
It is the hour of sext. The sun is high:
The Sun of Justice lays Him down to die:
Aside the Mother turns: Saint John is nigh,
And Magdalen her hand takes, silently

Weeping for woe. But yet more cruelly
Torn with compassion, stands the Mother by.
The blows fall thick. 'My God, my Father, why,

Oh, why this awful Justice?' Tis the cry
Wrung from her heart, yet uttered mentally.

The Cross is raised: she takes her place hard by
Beneath the quivering Victim. Hear His cry:
'Father, forgive.' O God-like Clemency.
For this, dear Lord, Thou earnest. Thou didst die
To win the right to pardon righteously.

Saved

'Father, forgive.' Oh, force Divine. Oh, cry
Which from the Lips of Jesus, verily,
Is boundless in its utterance, as He
Hath Merit boundless. Every Drop which He
Hath shed of Blood cries, 'Pardon,' endlessly.

Lo, in the heart of Mary tenderly
This prayer is echoed, raising her on high
In spirit to His side. All selfless, she
The Purpose recogniseth, for which He
Is hanging on that Wood of Infamy.

Doth He not speak in her, that she may be
United with Him now? Her agony
To see Him suffer hindereth not that she
The Cause remembereth: and - a moment - see,
She prayeth for that Felon, fervently.

He too had uttered words of blasphemy,
Not knowing what he did. But doth not she
Remember when the Sacred Infancy
Was sheltered in that Robber's cave? Oh, see,
For him she prays: 'Let him forgiven be.'

The light of grace hath chased the density
Of ignorance which filled his breast; and see,
To his companion on the Gibbet, he
Speaks words of deep import, reprovingly:
'Worthy are we to suffer, but not He.'

Grace conquers: from the Cross the Culprit, he
The King of Kings acknowledgeth - saith he:
'Oh, in Thy Kingdom, Lord, remember me.'

And Mary's heart respondeth: is not she
His Co-redemptrix? - saved upon that Tree?

And Jesus speaks. That Face in Agony
Turns not upon the penitent: yet He
Straight on his heart His Virtue pours, to be
His Strength and Healing. 'Verily,' saith He,
'Art thou this day in Paradise with Me.'

The Last Testament of Jesus

Jesus, Self-immolated on the Tree,
Quivering art Thou in mortal agony,
Yet ever Self-forgetting. Patiently
Beneath Thy Cross Thy Mother stands; ah me,
What grief is like to hers, thus watching Thee?

What love hath ever equalled hers? Yet she
Hath not withheld Thee from Thy destiny:
Though Thou, O Lord, from Heaven didst come, to be
A willing Victim for sin's penalty:
Her Offering art Thou; Love's Victim she.

O Soul heroic: God Himself in thee
Is imaged in thy strong maternity:
While grace supports thy Woman's entity,
Thy Soul unshaken seeks unwaveringly
That His most holy Will be done in thee.

Though thou His Mother art, God's Son is He -
Father and Mother must united be
In this dread Sacrifice; Heaven stoops to thee,
Who art the Star of our Humanity
Shining with Light from His Divinity.

Thus in the Soul of Jesus must there be
An all transcending Filial Love for thee,
Whose Life heroic practised faithfully
The Mother's own solicitude, while He
The Mirror of His Justice found in thee.

And now the end is nigh. He leaveth thee;
Before His dying gaze He seeth thee
The Mother of His Children: thou shalt be

In guerdon for thy soul's fidelity
His Helpmate in His Church, inseparably.

The loved Disciple - lo, he stands to be
The image of the faithful: then saith He
Whose Word is everlasting - tenderly -
'Woman, behold thy Son:' then, thrillingly,
'Behold thy Mother,' to Saint John saith He.

Dereliction

Mourneth all Nature; lo, the Sun would be
Veiled in thick gloom: the King of Nature, He
Speaks through His works inanimate. Ah me,
How is the world obscured: oh, verily,
Men's hearts alone are cold on Calvary.

Torn with a secret anguish, darkness see,
Enters the Soul of Jesus. Crieth He:
'My God, oh, why hast Thou forsaken Me?'
Trembles the Mother's heart: if such must He
Endure, oh, truly, will not also she?

Total eclipse: lo, Nature cannot lie
Unmoved. Oh, Vision terrible which He
Hath all through life beheld. This Vision she
Now sees reflected in her soul. Ah me,
Who else hath gauged Divine obscurity?

Mother of Desolation: verily,
What swords of anguish are reserved for thee.
Yet neither dost thou swoon, nor utter cry,
All selfless, all enduring - bitterly
Weeping for woe, yet standing, stedfastly.

'Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabacthani.'
Mystical Sorrow in that rending cry:
Mystical Union answers secretly
Deep in the Mother's consciousness. Oh, why?
The winepress both must tread on Calvary.

That Cry of Dereliction answers she,
As well He knows: who knows so well as He
Whose Word had made her what she is, to be

The Counterpart of His Humanity,
The Mirror of His dolorous Entity?

The deeper desolation, agony
Of soul and body that in dying, He
Was bound to suffer, so much higher she
Was bound to rise in merit. Verily,
Nearer to Him in death she could not be.

Consummatum Est

Deeper and deeper in that Agony
The waves close over Jesus. Outwardly
A fever racks His frame, and inwardly
A fever of desire: still hangeth He
Darkling upon the height of Calvary.

No succouring Angel's kind benignity
In His dire Passion may accorded be,
Seeming bereft of His Divinity.
Manhood alone is passible - yet He
Dieth the death - a God-Man on the Tree.

He speaks again: 'I thirst.' Oh, bitter cry
Wrung from the lips of human misery.
Oh, cry of pain exceeding: yet 'twould be
For the conversion of our souls, that He
Utters that cry of deadly agony.

They reach the sponge and vinegar, and He
Meekly receives it: so the end would be
At hand when He alone all prophecy
Shall have fulfilled: lo now, scarce audibly
He murmurs: 'It is finished.' - Heu, mihi.

But Mary hears. She knows the hour is nigh
When death shall bring release: with Him to die
Would be her bliss; but ah, that may not be;
Her's is a living death; in which is she
Alone upon the height of Calvary.

Well knows she 'All is finished.' And a sigh,
As once before, escapes her lips: ah why?
Her soul with Joseph's communes inwardly.

He knows that all is done: that she stands by
The dying Lamb on Blood-stained Calvary.

A thrill of supernatural potency
Like an electric shock, convulsively
Breaks through the caves of Limbo: suddenly
Tremble its strong foundations. Lo, they be
Prisoners of Hope, in full expectancy.

Death on the Cross

The Work is done: this world is ransomed: He
No more need suffer on the dreadful Tree.
Death comes not unsolicited, for see,
Tranquil in dying as in living, He
Yields of Himself His Soul and sets it free.

'Father,' quoth He, 'My Soul I render Thee,
Into Thy Hands;' so saying with a cry,
The Soul of Jesus passeth: wondrously
Convulsed is Nature that her God should be -
Him her Creator - dead, upon that Tree.

The mountains shake from summit to the sea;
And Earth's foundations, lo, interiorly
Tremble and quake. In the Catastrophe
Rent is the Temple's Veil. No more shall be
Jerusalem His Seat - eternally.

No; for the Work is done; the World will be
The Temple of the Holy One, where He
Shall place His Altars; and, in Mystery,
This self-same Sacrifice will offered be
Till Earth be filled as waters fill the sea.

The Soul of Jesus passeth. Suddenly,
Like sunlight streaming through the cloud doth He
Appear in Limbo. Tender radiancy
Those doleful prisons fills, and gloriously
All in their midst He shines - to set them free.

He comes to preach deliverance; comes to be
To them Messias: Conqueror is He
Of Death and Limbo. They His Glory see

And straightway worship: darkness changeth He
To light: and penitence to ecstasy.

And Mary meekly waits with John to see
What next betides: all else are gone but she
And those dear faithful Women. Yet is He
Not left as others; for the Lance would be
Witness to that great Death on Calvary.

In Limbo

The Rich Man in his grave hath tenderly
The Sacred Corpse enfolded. Wearily,
And wan with weeping, Mary turns to be
By John protected, knowing, certainly,
That He again will rise triumphantly.

But now the Mother's heart seems broken. She
Believes, yet scarcely comprehends how He
His Sacred Word will keep: and bodily,
She is exhausted. Ah, how humanly
Doth grace, O Blessed Woman, reign in thee.

The loved Disciple leads her filially
To his own home. The wife of Zebedee
Provides her chamber, where, unbrokenly
Her prayer to God may rise, for 'tis not she
Who dreams of unguents rare, undoubtedly.

They hover round her, nathless; carefully
Change they her soiled garments: piously
Store they the Blood-besprinkled Mantle. She
As in a dream obeys them silently -
And then is left to prayer, to ecstasy.

* * *

Ah, who may tell, sweet Mother, what would be
The Vision wondrous of that ecstasy.
How, clothed in splendour He would shine on thee
When, rapt in Spirit thou wouldst instantly
Into the nether caves of Limbo, flee.

Ah, is not Joseph all transcendently
Waiting upon the Lord? Dost thou not see

Adam in patriarchal dignity;
Noe, who should Earth's Second Father be;
And David with the harp and psaltery?

And Warriors, Prophets, Seers, who gloriously
Pass in procession? while thy tutored eye
Of each one scans the special dignity,
Whose words and Spirit had in days gone by
The Virgin's Son proclaimed in prophecy?

In Limbo with Jesus

Herself, doth Mary stand in radiancy
Of Light. With reverent dignity
Before her bend the Patriarchs, while she
Drinks in the Glory of her Son: and He
On her, His Chosen One, smiles graciously.

And one by one they pass - all splendidly
Clothed in the very Light of Jesus. She
As each approacheth, passing slowly by
In endless long procession, joyously
Sees how He blesseth them, with majesty.

Followeth the train of Women. Now doth He
Take by her hand, His Mother. Tenderly
Speaks He of her to them, and bids them be
Her subjects dutiful: when radiantly
They hail her Queen, and sing for jubilee.

But who these Little Ones, whose trophies be
The tokens of the Martyrs' dignity?
Crowned with the palm, in snow white robes, oh, see,
The Babes of Bethlehem. Will they not be
The Lamb's Companions in eternity?

And countless multitudes, unendingly
Throng round the Throne of Jesus. Ah, they be
Those unbelieving ones, when faithfully
The Ark by Noe was built, and vainly he
The Flood foretold for man's delinquency.

These, as the waters rose, all bitterly
Their sin acknowledged, and believed the cry
Of the true Prophet; when, repentantly

They turned to Heaven's Great God and fearfully
For mercy prayed, Who heard benignantly.

Then doth the Soul of Jesus preach: and they
In woe and wonder hearken silently;
'Till with the Cross He signs them, yea - 'till He
The Absolution tends. When, mightily,
Riseth in Limbo one victorious cry.

Ecstasy

Tis Easter morn, and Magdalen would be
With Salome and Cleophas. Oh, see,
With voices low, steps hurried, secretly
Laden with spices at the dawn of day,
Towards the Sepulchre they wend their way.

They have not sought the Mother. No; for she
Appears to sleep uninterruptedly;
And next to thought for Jesus, tenderly
For her they care. What wealth of sympathy
The heart of Woman hides, in verity.

* * *

Thus undisturbed, she from ecstasy
Awakes. When lo, that Heavenly radiancy
Seen in the Vision fills the room, and she
Looks up - that Blessed Glorious Form to see
In Flesh before her standing, lovingly.

Yes: He is risen. The tomb wherein He lay
Is empty now. The stone is rolled away;
The guards have fled, and He is here. Oh, say,
How can the Mother bear such radiancy,
Nor die for joy in that sweet ecstasy?

Low at His Feet she kneels: for scarcely she
Dare credit 'tis no vision: until He
Stoopeth to raise her gently. Verily,
New life glows through that touch, as tenderly
She gives Him smile for smile. How blest is she.

Ah, in that moment love, fidelity,
Find their reward. Oh, who is like to thee,

Woman Predestinate? Grand equally,
In sorrow and in joy. Lo, is not she
God's Own Conception from eternity?

But that still room, where in the Flesh stood He
First in His Glorified Humanity,
Alone bears witness to this ecstasy
Of pure unruffled joy. In silence, she
Her share reserves of this great Mystery.

From Death to Life

And He is gone again. And verily,
She too is risen. How other could it be?
Her faith had never faltered - never she
Had cancelled, e'en in thought, the purity
Of that her Sacrifice. Oh, happy she.

How calm she is. What graceful dignity
Sits on her upraised look. Alone is she,
Yet not alone. Life lives again to be
For ever hers - hers to Eternity.
And all the world is saved. Oh, happy she.

The world is saved; and saved by Him. Ah, see,
Conquered is death and His the victory.
Fulfilled is ancient prophecy, and He
The true Messias reigns. In Limbo, free,
The Fathers rest in peace. Oh, happy she.

However long, short still the time will be
When He will reign on earth triumphantly.
She sees it in her soul. Exultantly
Her pulses throb. 'Ah, Sion verily
Shall Him remember - Son of God is He.

'And on the throne of David He shall be
The Man to rule the Peoples righteously,
For King of Kings and Lord of Lords is He,
Son of my soul, whose I shall ever be -
The dear Hand-maiden of His dignity.

'From east to west, from north to south will be
The trophies of His wondrous Victory.
The Sun of Righteousness shall Gentiles see,

And gather fruits from the all-spreading Tree
Of Life, which Nature heals abundantly.'

With folded hands, and parted lips, oh, see
The Virgin Mother stand in ecstasy
When Cleophas and Mary wistfully
Enter the chamber. 'Mother of Jesus, see -
The Tomb is empty. Mary, risen is He.'

Mary's Hymn

And Mary answering: 'Wist ye not that He
Would rise again? O Sisters, verily,
Goeth He on before to Galilee.
Praise we the God of Jacob. Lo, 'tis He
Who Death by Life hath conquered, gloriously.

'Praise we the God of Israel. Oh, see,
Redeemed hath He His people. Verily,
In streams hath God salvation poured, since He,
The Lamb, hath sacrificed to set them free
From out the land of their captivity.

'The Lamb of God, whom prophets did espy,
The earth hath visited. Nor was His cry
Heard, in the ears of those who ruthlessly
Shed His dear Life-Blood. For the iniquity
Of Jacob was He smitten, utterly.'

The Angel of the Highest passed by
And saw the Blood-stained lintel. Lo, the cry
Is heard of adoration, which on high
For ever shall be uttered gloriously
In benediction for His victory.

The Lord hath gone before: His Cloud was nigh
And in the Cloud the brightness. Lo, we see
The Cloud hath fallen. But the Sun on high
Shines over all the earth. As Victor He,
The Lord, returns in triumph, gloriously.

Now in the shadows resting peacefully,
Behold the Sons of ancient prophecy
With Patriarchs and Fathers. There they be,

All generations of the Blest: for see,
On them hath shone the Orient from on high.

Blest be the God of Israel. Lo, we be
But His poor hand-maids: yet on us hath He
Mercy poured out in His benignity:
And from the dust of our great poverty
Raised Him a Branch to flourish, endlessly.

Glorified Humanity

The Passover is ended Verily,
But ten days since was it begun; and He,
The Paschal Sacrifice then slain, they see
Before their eyes, a Living Entity,
Risen in His Glorified Humanity.

How hard it was to realize. Yet see,
How full of tenderness and patience He
Opens their hearts to know the Mystery -
Not for their sakes; but for all time, that we
Might read and learn and love undoubtingly.

The little band of faithful pilgrims, see,
Prepare to journey homeward. There will He
Await them by the Galilean Sea.
For yet 'a little while' and He will be
Their Hope and Expectation, sensibly.

Capharnaum is the goal: the home that He
Had willed for her where His Disciples be,
And all resume their duties severally.
Peter and John go fishing: will not she
Return to household tasks, instinctively?

And He no longer needs a home. Where He
His watches keep remains a mystery.
That Sacred Flesh, delivered perfectly
From suffering and susceptibility,
Shares not the laws of our humanity.

He comes when least expected. Yet when He
Appears, 'tis rather His Divinity
That makes Him felt their Lord and God to be.

The Substance of that Nature would they see
Enclosed in Glorified Humanity.

Child-like are they in their simplicity,
And know Him scarcely yet. So, timidly
They question Him; while every Word that He
Now utters is a Heavenly Mystery -
A Word creative in the hierarchy.

Separation

O dearest Mother, let me weep with thee;
Nor do thou scorn my humble sympathy.
Ah, when I lift mine eyes to look on thee,
The Pearl of Womanhood, methinks I see
A depth all unexplored of grief in thee.

For, as the ivy twineth round the tree,
Thus, round thy God, thy nature did in thee;
So nigh wert thou that Source of Purity
That nearer, Human Nature could not be
Without a Hypostatic Unity.

Thy Guide His Word had been unceasingly;
His Presence, thy deep shelter. Ah, for thee
What other rest on earth could ever be?
What other tie exist?- Thus left to be
Alone with grief and deathless memory.

What to the soul more rending can there be
Than loss of all we love? Alone to be
In this world's wilderness of misery?
Who can replace the Chosen One? or be
A comforter in such extremity?

Yet Jesus understood it. So would He,
Who to His sorrowing ones had tenderly
Promised a Comforter, as mightily
Strengthen thy soul for separation - He
Whom never couldst thou love, as He loved thee.

Selfless, O Mother, though thou be; yet see,
This deadens not the pain. 'Twould sharper be
Because of love's transcendent purity,

For thou must live without Him. Thou must be
The Ivy, torn from its supporting Tree.

Thus muse I humanly. Yet, lo, we see
A tie existed between Him and thee
Like to none other. Though on earth thou be
And He in Heaven, yet could He stay by thee
And be thy All in All, consoling thee.

Ascended

O full of Grace; God's Spirit moulded thee
In the Conception of thine Entity:
And when at length God's Mother thou shouldst be,
Once more that Spirit overshadowed thee,
Thou Temple of the Blessed Trinity.

All through the hour of trial changelessly
Thy Soul had mirrored Godhead, which in thee
Had found a home created. Faultlessly
His Holy Spirit taught and guided thee
Till thou wert One with Him, and He with thee.

* * *

To Heaven thy face was lifted up, to see
Thine only Son, who there triumphantly
Ascended in the cloud: and did not He
E'en then rain on thy soul His dew, to be
The earnest of a greater Mystery?

No moment in thy life, oh, sure did He
Reign in thy heart with more supremacy;
Never through life more nigh appeared to be
Than when He seemed to be forsaking thee,
Such was the Love Divine encircling thee.

The feebleness of pure Maternity -
Had it existed - lives no more in thee.
He hath ascended: thou henceforth will be
Ascended with Him, living, verily,
A dying life 'till He return for thee.

A life of longing, transcendentally
Above creation lifted. Yet, to be

To His dear Church a parting legacy:
Mistress and Teacher of Apostles she,
Sole Witness to His Birth's integrity.

Her work hath she before her: 'tis to be
His Mirror and their Mother. Verily,
John hath He given her, Priest and Son to be
Whose thirst at that pure Fountain slaked shall be,
With Truths sublime, the Word's great Mystery.

Descent of the Holy Ghost

Yet one more glimpse, Sweet Mother, and of thee,
Lily of Eden, closed for us will be
The witness of Evangelists; will be
The story of thine earthly history
With all its joy, and all its agony.

* * *

The doors are closed. In prayer and secrecy
The little band of watchers ceaselessly
Looks up to Heaven. Not yet courageously,
But like dear children, waiting breathlessly
The Promise of the Father from on high.

And thou art in their midst, all modestly
Among the Women kneeling. Who would be
The spirit of that young community,
Mother of Jesus, if 'twere not for thee,
The Spirit's Spouse of their expectancy?

For while they pray, lo, all unconsciously
Thy gentle face recalls the days gone by;
And seems to bring this longed-for Presence nigh;
The mists dispersing of uncertainty,
The pain relieving of anxiety.

The first, the last time art thou called to be
His living Shadow to His Own: for see,
Soon will the mist be cleared, when, verily,
Will Jesus reign in them transcendently
Whose Spirit shall have come to set them free.

Then pray, O Mother; oh, devotedly
Dost thou His Will accomplish, for by thee

In those imperfect days, alone could be
His dear Intentions prayed for perfectly
In whom His Spirit ruled ineffably.

At length He comes: those fiery Tongues will be
The Tokens of His Presence. Lo, they be
Ravished with zeal and holy ecstasy;
No longer babes, Preachers of Truth we see,
And God His Fire hath kindled, verily.

The Death Slumber

A life all hid in Jesus, lo, we see
Accomplished is from first to last in thee.
Hidden - yet glowing with a brilliancy
All time shall fill, all ages glorify,
God's bright Ideal in Humanity.

Thy soul so human hath been rapt on high,
Hath touched the sceptre of our destiny;
Which touch hath quickened and exalted thee
The while its greatness overshadowed thee,
Of all His works the sweetest Mystery.

Flesh art thou of our flesh, yet canst thou be
Than Angels purer in thy Purity,
Under the law of Adam's race; yet see,
Bearing the seal of deathless entity;
Yet for obedience, dying lovingly.

The Partner art thou of Redemption. He
Whom thou hast borne hath died for us and thee.
And thou for love of Him wilt die, and be
The perfect Sharer of the destiny
Which raised from death to life the human Tree.

Thy work in life is done. Yet verily,
What here hath been begun, unendingly
Shall be continued. God's Own Word in thee
Incarnate was; His every Word in thee
Creative is of deathless energy.

Yet in thy virginal simplicity,
Naught of the honours heaped in store for thee,
Naught of the splendours now awaiting thee,

Naught of the endless glory shared by thee
Stirs thy least secret longing, verily.

E'en at Its Source, the Lode-star drawing thee
Is Uncreated Love. What bliss for thee
Dying, to live indeed; with Him to be
United; by His Side inseparably.
Then sleep, sweet Mother, for He calleth thee.

Assumed

As sleep, to thee came Death; and when for thee
Death-slumber closed thine eyes, Death ceased to be.
Nor calm decay, nor age, nor malady,
Nor base infirmity had wasted thee;
It was the Voice of Jesus, calling thee.

Pure in Conception, that same Purity
Had vested thee with Immortality
Bought by the Blood of Jesus, who in thee
His Home Immaculate had made, which He
With every Grace had filled supernally.

The Word thy Flesh assumed; that Flesh will He
For ever wear to all eternity.
Corruption could not touch it; wherefore He
After three days arose, that He might be
The Flesh whence springeth Immortality.

His Flesh and Blood He gives, that we may be
One Flesh and Blood with His Humanity.
Would He not therefore prize thy flesh which He
Had taken for His Own substantially -
Raising it from the tomb ineffably?

Lily of Paradise, oh, fittingly
Thou in the garden-shade wert bound to die;
The Church was busy; all around would be
Her trophies and her triumphs, yet was she
Unconscious of her fairest victory.

For who, O Queen, is this awaiting thee?
Who cometh in the twilight seeking thee?
Who knocketh at thy door? No Angel He

Who opes thy tomb, though Angels sing of thee
Scattering thy bed with roses, daintily.

Lo, from the sunlit Orient cometh He,
Thy Soul's Beloved: He hath awakened thee,
And thou art risen. He hath quickened thee;
And from the desert, lo, He leadeth thee
In beauteous glorified Humanity.

Crowned

O Mother of Salvation; lo, to thee
I fain must turn to aid my poverty.
Who may with eye unscathed approach and see
Thee by His Side thus standing, gloriously
Crowned with the palm-branch of His victory?

Four thousand years have fled, and ceaselessly
Hath evil run its course; yet now, oh, see
Rising above our crushed Humanity,
God's Fair Ideal, in our entity
Within the veil of His Divinity.

Oh, with what awful, dread humility
Stand there, God's Holy Ones: in them, oh, see
Jesus and Mary: God's best work is she;
His Wood of Incorruptibility,
Whence rose the Ark of Immortality.

The Son of God and Mary, lo, is He:
And He, the Son of her humanity,
Crowns her as Queen in three-fold dignity;
The Glory of the Blessed Trinity
Circles her brow, for all eternity.

The King and Queen have triumphed gloriously
Over the reign of death; and where they be,
There is the' court of Heaven. Sing joyously,
Oh, sing, ye choirs of Angels: now ye see
The Word-made-Flesh in Godlike Majesty.

In triumph, lo, hath He gone up on high
There to prepare His Place ineffably.
His Father's many mansions, lo, they be

All ready for His Children; henceforth, see
How reign the King and Queen benignantly.

All is not ended; though in Light we see
Those first-born Children of humanity.
Each soul that enters there will also be
The battle-field of a new victory,
Bought with His Blood - 'till time shall ended be.'

Part Three: The Kingdom of God and Queenship of Mary

Rhythms CXXV - CL

Kingdom and Queenship

Argument of Part Three

With the Third Part commences the contemplation of the Kingdom (Rhythm 125), the Glory of the Court of Heaven, and the Vision of the Blessed; and this is followed by the formation of a Triumphant Church in the midst of persecution, and the bitter warfare between good and evil. The personal activity of our Lady in the affairs of the Church Militant are touched upon. (Rhythms 133 - 140) The worship of the Church is then contrasted with idolatrous worship in Rhythm 138.

Among the remainder of the poems are found several paraphrases, beginning with Rhythms 140 and 141 which are taken from Holy Scripture: then follow others from Saint Basil of Seleucia and Saint Epiphanius in Rhythm 144; from Saint Cyril of Alexandria in Rhythm 147, and from Saint Ambrose de Virginibus, Rhythm 148.

The doctrine contained in the Poems is sustained throughout, by the words and devotions of the early and the later Fathers of the Church; by the testimony of Saints and Doctors; and above all, by the explicit teaching of the Catholic Church in the Missal and Breviary as the exponents of Sacred Scripture.

* * *

Let my soul strive day by day to make progress in God, to fall away from itself, and wholly to lose itself, so that in no wise it may be able to find itself, but that it may come into deep self-annihilation, or self-abjection, so as to die to itself and all things in God, and to live on God, working all things through Him. - *The Fiery Soliloquy with God*, by Master Gerlac Petersen, Canon Regular of Deventer (a contemporary of Thomas a Kempis)

* * *

A precious gift has our earth this day sent up to heaven, that by the giving and the receiving thereof may be knit together in happy covenant of

friendship the things of man with the things of God, the things of earth with the things of heaven, the lowest with the highest. For thither has the glorious fruit of earth gone up whence the best and most perfect gifts come down. For when the Blessed Virgin ascends on high she also shall give gifts to men. - *Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, from 'Virgin Mother of God'*

Prologue to Part Three

I sing the Song of Songs; the Song of Love.
I sing the Epic of the Incarnate King:
I sing the Kingdom's triumph and the fall
Of Satan's hosts before the Virgin Queen.
  I sing of Strife stupendous and the Palm
Of Martyrs, Saints, Confessors; and I sing
Of voices multitudinous and sweet,
Which John heard on the empyrean stair.
  Of Crowns I sing - and of the end of Time,
And of that Vision of Eternal Peace
Which makes the unity of hearts below,
And upward draweth unperfected souls -
Suffering purgation - or, on earth in time,
Or, in the timeless fires of Purgatory.

  Thus have I dared in humble rhymes to sing
The Love of God, and our Immortal Queen,
Reigning with Jesus near the Great White Throne.

To God be Glory - God, the Three in One.

* * *

Hail, O Virgin, Most Worthy, chosen before the creation of the world: hail, in that delicious dew, which floweth into thee out of the most Blessed Trinity by reason of the Glory and the Bliss in which thou art, and for ever: thou wilt be ravished above all creatures in Heaven and earth.

- words received in a vision by Saint Mechtilde

- text taken from Mary: The Perfect Woman, by Emily Mary Shapcote

Justice and Mercy

The Kingdom's Throne is reached; for this did He
The bloody conflict enter: for this, she
Was born Immaculate, nor ceased to be
The Valiant Woman, whose great destiny
Made her the Fount of His Humanity.

Through Eve's seduction, Adam's unity
With her in disobedience, lo, we see
The triumph short-lived of the Enemy:
That proud Archangel, who designed to be
By sin's conception, Sovereign Entity.

And he had seemed to conquer; had not he
Four thousand years been master? Yet, oh see,
Closed is his power with flood-gates now; and he
Whose word created death, himself will be
The victim of his word, unendingly.

O thou Insensate, who wouldst surely be
Like God-Creator - but a parody
Alone art thou; God's Word is Life, and He
For Life and Beauty all createth. See,
Thy word createth death - deformity.

That which thou wroughtest, Lucifer, shall be
The fate of all rebellion: being he
Whose act engendered death, thine enmity
The way prepared for Justice: verily,
Sin's own reward created was by thee.

For darkness utter the abode will be
Of Pride's rebellious victim. Light hath he
Forsaken; and the Light of Light will be

To him all inaccessible: would be
Shunned for its very sake - self-judged is he.

The Just hath risen to Judgment. Now will He
His Kingdom found in Justice: Death hath He
Down-trodden, and a path hath made to be
The refuge of the sinner. Thus doth He
Mercy with Justice blend triumphantly.

The Chosen People

O Sacred Scripture, with what dignity
Hath been revealed the Truth of God in thee.
High as the heavens, deep as unfathomed sea
Reigneth the Word Omnipotent, to be
Received as Truth, that Truth may make us free.

From first to last, in all His ways, we see
One Word, One Spirit, working mightily.
Earth was not made, nor ever meant to be
The Kingdom of Election; wherefore, He
Wrought out His great Ideal, patiently.

He on created Being wilfully
Freedom of Will bestowed; benignantly
Allowed the will all tolerance; and He,
Who knew the frailty of Humanity,
That Grace alone its force could ever be-

Reckoned not sin against the race, ere He
The Law from Sinai gave; but tenderly
Watched o'er His fallen ones, and let them be
By prophets guided - such Methusale,
Seth, Noe, Abraham - the Fathers, see.

And Moses last on Sinai: oh, by Thee,
Dear Lord, was given the Law which, verily,
Revealed of sin the foul malignity,
Revealed the wealth of innate dignity,
And raised Truth's standard with her battle cry.

Now see a chosen People. Lo, did He,
The Everlasting Word rule mightily.
Jehovah was their King; yea, verily,

'I Am Who Am,' Eternal Entity,
Guided and blessed His flock, immediately.

They cast Him off: a mortal King should be
The King of Israel. Then did prophecy
Speak in His Name; Messias that should be
The Seed of David. Oh, triumphantly
Would He the Kingdom claim, eventually.

Witnesses

Lo, thus in secret and in privacy
Looking to Him, Messias that shall be,
Waiting in faith and ardent longing, see,
The Church is founded. Lord of times is He,
And to His faithful speaks He inwardly.

The strife is hot, 'twixt endless Purity
And almost endless blind delinquency.
The heathen rage, the very hierarchy
Of Juda, lifts its voice in stubborn cry
Against the prophets and their ministry.

The Prince of Darkness heads the fierce array
With all his myrmidons. The Light of Day
He fain would quench: the powers of earth obey
The sensual demons: while the unholy fray
In fury drives the Sons of Light away.

All through their conflicts, many thousands be
Faithful and true: a dolorous destiny
Awaits indeed their holy energy -
Martyrs of faith and of fidelity -
Forerunners in His race, behold, they be.

A cloud of witnesses unceasingly
Thronged to the battle's front - these, verily,
By faith have conquered kingdoms; valiantly
Died for the crown of justice; would not be
Delivered, for the Hope that was to be.

It was the Word Himself who promised. He
Had through His Prophets spoken: and would be
Adored and worshipped under veils: 'till He

Should come and all the Law fulfill, and be
The Priest and Victim of Humanity.

And through the darkling cloud which, verily,
Hid the true brightness of His Entity,
One gentle Ray beamed forth, and tenderly
Broke on the troubled waters. It was she,
The Virgin Mother- sung in prophecy.

The Battle-Field

Thus from the first beginning, steadily
The work proceeded; yea, the Workman He
Who framed the Earth's foundation. Graciously
Wrought He and prospered, for Humanity
Needed His grace and power to set her free.

For as the earth was framed, and patiently
He waited for His laws to act, to see
The fruit of inward working; so, did He
Await the working of His Law, to be
The grounding of His Throne's stability.

Oh, what a marvel that no time would be
Too long, no care too great; in verity,
No gem too precious; no adornment be
Too exquisitely beautiful, to be
Lavished upon our poor humanity?

To make a home for creatures who would be
Heartlessly disobedient: can we see
This wealth of intellect creative, see
This perfect blending of a harmony
Born of design, nor worship Deity?

Can we not wonder almost equally,
That such stupendous power should seemingly
Be spent in vain? while, even thoughtlessly,
Its great results are looked upon to be
The heirloom of the creature? Verily,

Lost in amazement is the soul, to see
Eternal Purpose spending Dignity
And Wisdom and Almightiness, to be

Used by the creature so ungratefully
And all its fair world ravished, hopelessly.

A battle-field this earth was made to be:
The battle-field of each man's destiny;
The battle-field for Jesus. He would be
Alone the Champion of Humanity,
In whom All Good will triumph finally.

The Enemy

O fierce Deceiver, who art wondrously
Deceived and wrested from thy venture, see
Growing in secret and stability
The purpose of creation. Fruitlessly
Hast thou the warfare waged. God ruleth thee.

Great though thy intellect, thou canst not see
A hand's breadth more than He hath granted thee:
Thou canst not gain a point, unless it be
For God's own purposes conceded thee;
Nor, unpermitted, gain one victory.

His is the grandeur of thy power, and He
Will reckon for its usage; woe to thee.
Thy grace misused will all recoil on thee:
Thy very might the thunder-bolt will be
To hurl thee headlong through eternity.

The Archangel Michael cometh presently
When thou again wilt hear that battle-cry:
'Who is like God?' But not as yet will be
The final consummation. Time will be
Permitted for thy latest blasphemy.

'Rejoice, ye Heavens: yea, sing with jubilee.
But mourn, O Earth: thy foe comes down on thee
With wrath and power endued. Yet knoweth he
His time is short, and therefore urgeth he
Against the Woman, warfare - ruthlessly.'

Hear in the heavens a cry: 'Triumphantly
Come is the Kingdom of our God; for see,
The strength of Christ is manifested. He

Hath the accuser baffled. Nor will be
Upraised the trophies of his victory.

'The Accuser's time is short. His enmity
Toucheth the Woman not, yet shall it be
Poured on the Righteous Seed.' Oh, stedfastly
Fight on until the end, since War must be
Forerunner of a gladsome Victory.

Vision

The Queen is crowned in Heaven. There standeth she
Upon the Lord's Right Hand in majesty,
Clothed with the Sun, and crowned eternally
With Power and Wisdom and Benignity.
Queen of Creation, Queen of Heaven is she.

Around their thrones the Heavenly Court should be
Of Patriarchs and Prophets. Lo, we see
From Limbo freed, a holy galaxy
Of Saints and Martyrs; souls that wondrously
The fight had fought, and conquered gloriously.

The Kingdom of their expectation, see,
Is founded. The chief Corner-stone is He
Who spake unto the Prophets. Verily,
They with Apostles the foundations be
On which His Temple rests eternally.

And now, in God, the holy Fathers see
The work on earth, which, like a spreading tree
Begins its shade to throw protectingly,
Athwart the Gentile World. In Him they be
Transported thither as in ecstasy.

Through every soul there thrills a sympathy
New born for them: but which henceforth will be
The unceasing token of that Unity
Of Purpose, Life and Sovereign Entity
Which flows through all Christ's members, vitally.

The Sacred Heart is centre: and they be
New born in Him. His Body, verily,
Fills theirs with Light; His Spirit's Unity

Enters each several Soul; with Him they be
One sacred Temple, indivisibly.

In God His Church they see, His Hierarchy -
And how His Spirit governs. Inwardly
See they and contemplate each Mystery
Which binds the Body's members. Heaven will be
The House of Intercession, ceaselessly.

The Church Triumphant

Triumphant Church: through ages past were ye
Chosen for sons among the tribes, to be
The First-fruits of Redemption; verily,
Vain is the malice of the Enemy,
Vain in the past, and vain shall ever be.

This see they, and they fall adoringly
Before the Throne of Jesus: now they see
In open vision clear, man's destiny -
The strife 'twixt good and evil; and they see
How evil shall be crushed eternally.

But time is time no longer: lo, they see,
E'en as the course of time unendingly
In God is ever Now; so, changelessly,
The gaze of Glorified Humanity
Conceives the whole as present, endlessly.

In God our Nature glorified, we see
All interpenetrated brilliantly
With light so subtle, that each soul must be
By contemplating God, ineffably
Drawn to the confines of Divinity.

Each separate soul a separate Heaven must be
In which His Beauty shines translucently.
Yet each with each, though varying rank may be,
Form but one cycle in the Entity
Of that Eternal Vision which they see.

And in this Fount of Bliss most lovingly
Do they not look upon the world, and see
Each soul that calls to them for aid, to be

The object of their intercession; yea, to be
Their helpers in the struggle, mightily?

Yet is their joy not less; for who may see
The Face of God and not transported be
With overpowering love and ecstasy?
For happiness in God will ever be
The mother of Divinest Charity.

The Centre of Unity

To us whose thought is, circumscribedly
By time's horizon closed, assuredly
Such sight incomprehensible must be.
For us, one point is all, and therein we
Our own circumference and centre, see.

Not so the natures glorified, and free
From weights and hindrances, which bodily
Press dawn the human soul; they stedfastly
Tend to the Centre of All-Being, and see
Him, the sole Self-existing Entity.

The first-fruits of their bright humanity
Is He who reigns in glory; even He,
Death's Conqueror, who vanquished sin; yea, He
Reigns over Heaven and Hell, till He
Shall sunder life from death, eternally.

He reigns supreme; His Kingdom cannot be
Wrested from His Right Hand; all else must be
Before the end subdued; and valiantly
On earth the Church must fight, and Heaven will be
A partner in the struggle, faithfully.

Now hath the Lord of Hosts triumphantly
Founded His Kingdom's glory; yet will He
Full many a triumph gather, ere shall be
The end accomplished of His victory,
And the fierce Dragon vanquished, finally.

The travail of His Sacred Soul to see
Accomplished in His members fruitfully,
His satisfaction and His joy shall be:

Them leads He on, and, in His Footsteps, see
Conquering they go to conquer, fearlessly.

Thus doth the Church Triumphant ceaselessly
Increase her borders: while on earth we see
War to the knife; and Central Fires will be
The cleansing of earth's stains. Undoubtedly
Till all be consummated, thus 'twill be.

Communion of Saints

The Queen is in their midst; to her shall be
The care committed of their ministry:
Their intercession, hour by hour, will she
Offer before the Throne of Deity,
The while her own ascends, unweariedly.

The work seems boundless, as the Love which He
Pours down upon a saved Humanity.
For guilt and woe though boundless seemingly,
Lie in the bounds of His Benignity,
Unfathomable, shoreless as the sea.

Yet not a soul will live but it must be
Purchased by Him - yea, brought to Him, to be
Washed in the ruddy Stream of Calvary.
No sin, no least defectibility,
But cleansed in that great Sacrifice must be.

Nor may a soul the fires of Hades see
But looks for its deliverance; yearningly
Watching that Prayer and Sacrifice may be
Applied to its relief immediately -
Longing, but oh, 'not struggling to be free.'

For this the lisping prayer of Babes may be
Offered in suffrage. Impetratingly
Riseth all prayer as incense ceaselessly
In clouds, by censer-bearing angels; see,
The aroma fills Heaven's Courts, deliciously.

Her Sacrifice, the Church unweariedly
Daily for sinners offereth. We may see
Her sons in throngs all fighting valiantly;

All helping each; each helping all; to be
Crowned with the palm of well-earned victory.

Yet not a prayer; nay, not a sigh will be
Lost on its heavenward way. No babe shall be
Neglected in its simple psalmody.
While earth with Heaven unites, that God may be
Loved above all things, universally.

Thy Kingdom Come

There is no time in Heaven. In God they see
Time as a point; in His Eternity
Time, that is changeless in intensity;
For death and change are swallowed equally
In that all-thrilling sight of Deity.

The Eleven are there: one still is missing. He
The last remaining Witness who shall see
At Patmos - though in chains - in ecstasy
The Vision of the End, when closed shall be
The Revelation of Man's destiny.

For still the Sixth Day shines: in which will be
Fulfilled the work of God's Activity.
Heaven for the Saints is Rest; yet verily,
It is the Rest of changeless entity -
Nor yet the Sabbath of God's Rest, to be.

For Jesus reigns, and gathers ceaselessly
His children of all times - and mightily
Worketh the Holy Ghost whose ways we see
Are secret as the wind. For cometh He
And goeth, as He willeth, noiselessly.

The Kingdom cometh not 'till all shall be
Accomplished; and that hour alone knows He
Who knows as God, God's secrets. Verily,
Sigh Earth and Hell, 'Thy Kingdom come,' to be
Responded to in Heaven - adoringly.

Thus roll the years; while persecutions be
The watchword of the Kingdom's purity,
The threshing-floor on which the Martyrs see

The glory of their calling. Blood must be
The sign portentous of their Victory.

The Kingdom gathers strength; and righteously
Its Saints and Doctors work; while heresy
Finds everywhere discomfiture. For see,
Around them stand Death's Conquerors, who be
More than a match for Satan's policy.

Vengeance of the Lamb

The Strength of Christendom, as time rolls by,
Back drives the waves of that infernal sea
Which, like a second Flood, unceasingly
Hell vomits - since, beneath the apple-tree
Corrupted was our Mother's fealty.

God's Spirit bloweth that the clouds may be
Riven to let in sunlight. Oh, to see
From Heaven's pure region, how this anarchy
Yields to the Gospel-message. Gradually
Dispersed is darkness. Light reigns from the sky.

For Peace was His own watchword. Peace must be
Where shines His Spirit's Presence, changelessly.
Nor persecution, nor calamity
Devised by Satan's malice, e'er may be
Disturber of that sweet tranquillity.

Yea, Satan's reign is o'er. The White Horse see,
Bearing the Rider on to victory.
He who once triumphed over all, now He
Rides o'er the Earth unseen - is He,
The Smiter of the Smiter that would be.

Lo, wars and pestilence and famine be
His servants to command. For, verily,
Vengeance is His; and vengeance sure will be
Not long delayed on them who ruthlessly
Make war upon His members - God is He.

Beneath the Altar, Martyr-souls there be
Who gave their lives in witness. Shall not He
Their blood require? while unto each one He

The white-robe gives of triumph? until He
Their bodies shall restore right gloriously?

Until that day of wrath and mourning be
When earth shall quake, and sun shall darkened be,
And moon shall be as blood; when stars shall be
Hurled down, and earthly potentates shall flee
From that Dread Face, who then their Judge will be.

Hope and Struggle

This hast thou seen, Beloved John, and we
Look up in faith, and worship reverently:
That which for us is passing, was for thee
A present, awful, glad Solemnity -
And present, now as then, the same must be.

What past or future unto us may be,
Lies in the Vision of Eternity,
All tending to one end; and that shall be
The triumph of the Kingdom, which to thee
Was mirrored in that clear and glassy sea.

* * *

Thus stoopeth Heaven to serve us instantly
Who were but shadows on that sunlit Sea.
Who doth not hope with ardour he might be
One of the multitude whom John did see,
Palm-bearing, white-robed, Sons of Victory?

Oh, in the past, as now, we surely see
How all is in God's keeping: verily,
That which is done, is done by His decree:
But would we triumph, bound are we to be
Champions on His Right Hand, undauntingly.

God worketh not without us: we are free.
But in our freedom, we can never be
Aught but the slaves of sin-wrought destiny,
Did we not work with Him, as heirs to be
With Him, and in Him, indivisibly.

O Virgin Mother, let me beg of thee
To help me in my strivings. Thou canst be

The Refuge of the feeble. Unto thee
Is given the sceptre. Hold it out to me;
And lend me courage as I sing of thee.

Lo, in those ages long gone by I see
How thou wert hidden. Strife was not for thee.
Thy Sun was gaining strength; and secretly
Thou dravedst mists away, that thus might be
Proclaimed the Incarnate God, victoriously.

False Worship

Now yearn the Faithful for thy rule. Oh see,
Whilst heathen darkness lingered, light would be
Flickered with clouds, and ancient customs be
Transferred from heathen worship unto thee,
As to some later found divinity.

Devotion uninstructed needs must be
Tinctured with sensitive idolatry.
The Peoples had their queen of heaven, and she
Was honoured with a sacrifice- to be,
O Virgin Queen, in error paid to thee.

'Twas but an instant in that history
Of early times: nor might such ever be
A moment tolerated. Not to thee,
Dear Queen of Heaven, may sacrifices be
Offered in token of our fealty.

To God alone One Sacrifice may be
Offered by holy hands, incessantly -
Since Sacrifice is Sign of Deity.
No Goddess thou, O Mary, though thou be
Allied so closely to Divinity.

The ban, thyself art thou of heresy:
And from the earliest ages wouldst thou be
Its deadliest foe. How small soe'er 'twould be
That bordered only on idolatry,
Such nascent error would be crushed by thee.

Arabian, Thracian women offered thee
A little sacrifice of cakes: and see,
At once the Collyridian heresy

By Bishop's hand uprooted - and to be
The first and last of such idolatry.

Honour and worship which thy majesty,
O Heavenly Queen, demands, be paid to thee,
The greatest in creation's dynasty.
But God is God alone; and Deity
Alone by sacrifice adored may be.

Worship of the Church

Thus 'twas the Will of God that heresy,
E'en in the form of blind idolatry,
Should teach the future ages, how for thee
Thy worship was established. Verily,
Ne'er was the time thou couldst unhonoured be.

The Church with joy, herself saluteth thee
In name of all creation. 'Hail,' saith she,
'Hail, Virgin Pure, the Grape hath sprung from thee.
Hail, Gate of Heaven. Hail, joy of all - to be
The gladness of Apostles, praising thee.

'Oh, meet it is and right, that gratefully
Hymns should be sung with joy in praise of thee,
Yet cannot we extol thee worthily:
And therefore is it due, that silently
We praise the Mystery achieved in thee.

'Open to us, who humbly cry to thee,
Those arms immortal which have tenderly
Borne the Creator. Virgin, pray that He
Us from temptation may deliver. We
To Him look up, from sin to set us free.

'Oh, that thy dew, Beloved of God, might be
Poured out upon our nature plenteously
Its fires unholy to extinguish. See,
Thy light we need to kindle ours - to be
The earnest of our immortality.

* * *

'Thee, Temple unprofaned of Deity,
The Spotless Vase, the Sacred Ark, we see.

O Choice of God, all Strength is born of thee;
All Glory, which to poor humanity
Is needed to salvation, comes from thee.

'He whom thou clothedst supernaturally
With the dear Mantle of our Flesh, can be
Saviour of whom He will: and specially
Of those, who, for His Love and Worship, be
Found loving most, and learning most from thee.'

Sceptre of Orthodoxy

Acknowledged is thy rule, and it will be
Unending as God's endless Dynasty.
The nearer thou to Him, so verily,
The mightier His Perfections shine in thee,
In Wisdom, Might and perfect Charity.

By Wisdom art thou bound the soul to free
From doubt and darkness, when it looks to thee;
Or, when it struggles with the enemy,
And seems to fight in vain: then shouldst thou be
The Key that opens Heaven's serenity.

The Life of Prayer art thou. Thy sanctity,
O Virgin Mother, blends it endlessly
Before the Throne. The fire of Charity
That draws to God thy perfect entity
Hath but one purpose, when it flames in thee.

The Serpent's strength consists alone that he
Our nature tempts. He knows thy enmity,
And that thy strength shall manifested be
In mightier mediation - silently,
With purest hands uplifted, pleadingly.

Thou wert her client, great Saint Gregory,
Thou giant Wonder-worker. Worthily
Wouldst thou prepare thee for that dignity
To which the Church had nominated thee -
Deep pondering on the Blessed Trinity.

For, in the days of early heresy
Each doctrine of the Faith was openly
Depraved, if not blasphemed: and thou wouldst be

Prepared on all sides. Then appeared to thee
The great Apostle John, and spake to thee.

And with him, thou, O Virgin: for to thee,
Through the Evangelist, 'twas given to be
The Expoundress of the eternal Mystery
In words which, from that Church bequeathed, should be
As heritage to all posterity.

Theotokos

Deep in the Church's Breast, instinctively
Grew thy devotion, Mary: for in thee
Thy children recognized all gifts that be
Shrined in thy union with Divinity,
Nor grudged thee ought that proved thy sanctity.

Yet thou didst hide thy Sovereign Dignity,
Since for His sake alone was given to thee
To be the Mother of Humanity.
He is the First and Last. 'Tis He must be
Acknowledged by the nations - and through thee.

So, in the hour when rampant heresy
Denied the Manhood of thy Son, then, see,
The Church arose, and with one voice did she
Proclaim the Mystery of His Birth from thee
Proclaim thy rights in thy Maternity.

Then, Mother, didst thou seem to speak, to be
Expoundress of thine honours, willingly.
Then didst thou stand in regal dignity,
Proclaimed the Queen, near God's Own Majesty,
And take the Throne thy Church prepared for thee.

Theotokos, acclaimed: oh, verily,
Great was her joy and high her jubilee.
Didst thou not make in Heaven that Light to be
Which filleth all the earth exceedingly?
Thyself the Cloud, wherein His Rays we see?

The voice we hear in distant prophecy,
How clear, how sweet. 'My dwelling is on high,
And in the Pillar of the Cloud am I

Enthroned. The circuit of the Heaven have I
Alone encompassed; in their depths am I.

'The all-engulphing waves of Deity
Have been my path, whereon I fearlessly
Have trodden; every nation unto me
Hath bowed; while all the peoples cheerfully
Have owned my rule, my gift of majesty.'

Mary's Jubilee

'The Power of the Almighty rests on me;
The hearts of high and low are turned to me;
My rest therein I seek, where is for me
Prepared the Lord's Inheritance, to be
The resting-place of this my dignity,

'The Lord commanded, and He spake to me -
He the Creator who created me:
Who for His own dear Rest hath chosen me,
And made Himself a secret place in me,
That He might dwell therein - said He to me:

'Thy dwelling-place be Jacob; yea, for thee
Be Israel thine inheritance: yea, be
Rooted in My Elect. My Church for thee
Thy home, thine everlasting Rest shall be
Who art My Chosen from Eternity.

'Thus did the Lord Himself assign to me
My place in time, from all eternity;
Nor in the future shall I cease to be
His Hand-maid and His Minister. Oh, see,
Till time shall cease, Him serve I ceaselessly.

'So was His Hand-maid 'stablished. So shall she
Find rest in Sion, for her home shall be
Jerusalem; and there her power shall be
Made known; and in the full assembly, she
Of Saints shall be exalted, mightily.

'Mother of Holy Love and Fear am I:
From me all graces flow abundantly:
The way of Life, of Truth, is found in me;

All ye who thirst, come hither unto me,
And gather of my fruits, unendingly.

'The Cinnamon and Myrrh alike will be
The witness of my presence. I shall be,
Through bitterness of soul, anointed. See,
The Vine am I, and the fair Olive-tree.
Come then, and taste my Fruits, unsparingly.'

Mater Admirabilis

Mother of God, oh, blame me not. For see,
As opens out thy glorious history,
My feeble voice, and feebler learning, be
Unable to embrace the Mystery
Which swells in grandeur as it shines on me.

Ah, breaking through the clouds which heresy
And Satan's craft engender, lo, we see
From time to time thy form, which graciously
Inclines to earth. Oh, surely thou must be
Never far off from those who wait on thee.

Thou sendest us thine Angels who shall be
Employed in thine untiring ministry.
Thou visitest the prisons, and for thee
No place too mean, but finds thee willingly
Present in woe and in extremity.

Thy care, Sweet Mother, laps us in a sea
Of pure compassion: thou art, verily,
All that our nature needs, and we may be
As children cradled on thy breast, when we
Our hope and confidence have placed in thee.

The blind, the halt, the deaf, they call on thee,
And thou providest for them tenderly.
Throughout all lands thy children openly
Have by their faith and love attracted thee
And to thy Shrines have run, incessantly.

And where thou art beloved, there, heresy
Can never reign triumphant. There shall be
The worship of the Church in purity;

There will the tender love of Jesus be;
And there adored the Blessed Trinity.

There to the people will the Gospel be
Proclaimed and honoured; there the poor will be
Found faithful in the midst of poverty -
They, who in hearth and home dare look to thee,
Their Life, their Hope, their Advocate to be.

Worship of Saints

Abyss of Splendour; lo, the Saints in thee,
And Fathers of the Church, were taught to see
Thy greatness as in vision. Thus may we
Thee follow in their track, and also be
Constrained to worship thee, unerringly.

One Spirit breathed in them; the Mystery
Of Godliness was seen by them to be
As in a precious Ark, enshrined in thee;
Themselves, they looked therein, and they could see
The Light of Light, Itself transfiguring thee.

Rapt in the Light of indwelt Deity,
Whose all-transcending Love was poured on thee,
And gazing through that glow, they saw in thee
The human kind transformed - Divinity
Absorbing, penetrating, filling thee.

Thou wert the 'costly Vase:' they looked in thee,
And all the perfumes of the East they see
Could not emit the fragrance found in thee.
The 'exhaustless Ocean' wert thou? Then they see
Unutterable gifts of Grace in thee.

'Receptacle of the Divinity?'
Behold, the Fiery Throne appears in thee,
Throne of the King of Kings; then lo, for thee
Thy place above the Cherubim: in thee
'The inexplicable Utterance,' they see.

'Received into God's Counsels?' Lo; in thee
Hidden, unfathomable, depths they see.
'The Chariot of the Sun art thou?' In thee

Must intellectual Light surpassing be,
Who barest Light, yea, Light Itself, in thee.

After the All-adored Trinity,
In thee the Queen of Heaven and Earth they see:
After the Holy Paraclete, they see
A Paraclete Eve's woe to heal, in thee:
And next to Christ, a Mediatrix they see.

Praise

O Sacred Womb, God bearing; where we see
Our sin's hand-writing torn, our souls set free.
What gift, O Virgin, can we offer thee
In all ways worthy of thy Purity -
For whom, all earthly things unworthy be?

Garden of aramanthine Chastity;
Our Mediatrix with God; behold, in thee
A Temple worthy of the Lord we see.
All Holy Virgin, who so speaks of thee
All that is glorious, errs not, verily.

But faileth rather in exalting thee,
Whose merit hidden lies in Deity.
O sacred Treasure of the Church, whom we
Behold as Priestess and as Altar, see
The Bread of Life thou givest, ceaselessly.

What can I say, O Virgin? I would be
Unwearied in my prayer and praise of thee.
Oh, pardon thou my insufficiency.
Thou art the Heaven, the Throne, yea, verily,
The Cross in whose dear Arms the Saviour lay.

Eve did the Angels censure: Mary, thee
Do Angels praise, exulting joyously;
For thou the Advocate of Eve wouldst be,
And Adam hast uplifted wondrously;
While Peace hath visited the world, through thee.

The wall 'twixt Earth and Heaven is fallen, through thee;
And men have risen to Angel-heights, through thee;
The Cross hath shone upon the earth, through thee;

And Death is conquered and despoiled, through thee;
And Idols have been overthrown, through thee.

The Church's doctrine hath been spread through thee;
The Only Son of God we know, through thee;
He took the Flesh of our Humanity
To be our Jesus and our Lord, of thee -
To Him be glory, laud, eternally.

The Cause Reversed

Eve of the Fall was cause; and yet, not she,
But Adam wrought the death, and only he;
Yet had she been obedient, verily,
Death had not struck the whole posterity -
For Life had flourished in the Parent-tree.

Eve of our woe was cause; yet verily,
It was not Eve, but Adam who would be
The worker of our grief, and none but he;
He was the stock of our humanity,
Which stock was cursed when sin should grafted be.

Eve from the Serpent learned to love a lie;
Yet Adam was it wrought delinquency:
Eve wrought the garment of his shame; but he
Clothed him therewith, to hide impurity,
And life thus forfeited eternally.

This was of death the cause; shall we not see
How by the strength of Dual-unity
That cause shall be reversed, so good may be
The Conqueror of evil? Verily,
Wisdom condign thus wrought almightily.

The Life arose; and Mary, graced should be
Its cause to plead in our humanity:
She was obedient; yet it was not she
Who wrought out Life for Man, but only He
Who Life hath purchased for the Parent-tree.

Mary of Hope is cause; yet verily,
It was not Mary; it was only He,
Her Son and God's, who purchased Hope: for He

The Father is of that Humanity
In which New Stock the curse hath ceased to be.

And Mary heard the Angel; verily,
She heard the Truth and loved it; yet was He
The Truth Himself who spake - He, verily,
For whom she wrought the Garment in which He,
Clothed in her flesh, will live unendingly.

Glorified Humanity

He lives indeed - and in the Garment she
Had thus prepared, in her humility:
For, by her stedfastness in Grace was she
For us, and for herself the cause, that we
From Death were rescued; from our bonds set free.

The Cross hath He endured: but did not she
Offer her God in Sacrifice - so He
A Satisfaction all condign might be?
His acts were hers, and therefore shall she be
Our Sweetness and our Joy, eternally.

He was the Truth that set the nations free;
He was the Way; the tangled path did He
Make plain and even. Yea, the Life was He.
And Him - the Way, the Truth, the Life hath she
Borne in her bosom - Cause of Joy is she.

So wondrously united wilt thou be
In all that He intended, that on thee
Is found all Glory lavished that shall be
Prepared for things created. Yea, we see
The Garment of God's Splendour clothing thee.

Oh, meet and right it is, and due to thee
Who clothed thy God with Flesh, that thou shouldst be
Clothed with His Being's Beauty, who through thee
Accomplished in the Flesh, what only He
Accomplish could through His Divinity.

Oh, wondrous Contemplation, thou to be
Our Watchword and our Hope: yea verily,
Did Woman cause our woe? Tis even she

Hath brought us back our glory; even she
Who reigns in all that radiant Majesty.

Throned in the Heaven of Heavens, O Mary, be
All praise and benediction paid to thee
From men and angels ever; while through thee
All Adoration in its Source shall be
By God absorbed - the Eternal One in Three.

The Church's Jubilee

Mother of God, all hail: all hail, to thee,
Crown of our veneration: hail, to thee.
Who to the universe entire shalt be
Light unextinguished. Praise, all praise, to thee,
Sceptre of Truth, Crown of Virginity.

Hail, Temple indestructible, in thee
Is found the Abode of Him, whom, verily,
No place can circumscribe: all hail, to thee.
To thee, by whom the Holy Trinity
Adored and worshipped is - all hail, to thee.

By whom the heavens exult and devils flee:
Through whom Archangels sing for jubilee:
By whom the Tempter is hurled back, to be
Driven into blackness of obscurity:
Through whom his victim finds that he is free.

By whom the chains of dark idolatry
Are broken in creation: by whom we
The knowledge of all truth receive, and be
Received, through Sacramental Mystery,
Into a close relationship with thee.

By whom hath come, in our Humanity,
The Son of God, our Light of Light to be;
Who taught the Prophets in the past, to see;
By whom Apostles preached; by whom Kings be
Acknowledged - in the Holy Trinity.

Oh, who may reckon all the Gifts that be
Showered on thy gracious Person? Verily,
Gaze I with awe and wonder as in thee

I penetrate the Holy Mystery,
Conceived and understood alone by thee.

Oh, Virgin's womb: oh, miracle: oh, see
The Virgin and the Mother. Who shall be
Sufficient for these things? Contained I see
The Immense, the Inconceivable, in thee.
Mother of God, all hail, all hail, to thee.

Our Model

O Mother of our God, thus stedfastly
May we not fix our loving gaze on thee,
And contemplate our Model? since in thee
The portrait is of true Virginity,
With all the splendour of its Purity.

The loftiest Model of Perfection, see,
Sweet Virgin Mary, would be found in thee.
Not only spotless thy Virginity,
Thy Soul was spotless in simplicity,
Thy Spirit grounded in humility.

Grave in thy words wert thou: thy deeds would be
Marked with a forethought and intensity
The outcome of the Rule Divine in thee.
The Scriptures were thy study: they would be
The only contemplation dear to thee.

Sealed was thy Soul; alone to God would be
Its entrance ever open. Inwardly
His wonders didst thou ponder. Secretly
His words lay in thy heart, and wrought in thee
The full perfection that is found in thee.

Gracious thine outward bearing: ardently
Thou soughtest others' welfare, and wouldst be
The first to aid each one's necessity.
So wide and perfect was thy Charity,
That limit it had none, in verity.

Short was thy rest; and e'en in slumber, see,
Absorbed thy Soul keeps watch; repose for thee
Is still a time for prayer and piety.

Alone thou never wert, since God in thee
Was ever Present, entertaining thee.

Archangels for companions: Prophets, see,
With Holy Scripture e'er surrounding thee.
How couldst thou, Mary, ever lonely be
In whom was wrought Earth's loftiest Mystery,
Who wert its Channel and its Sanctuary?

Prayer and Praise

Hail, Mary, Hand-maid of the Trinity;
Spouse of the Holy Ghost, all hail, to thee;
Mother of Jesus, hail, all hail, to thee;
Sister of Angels, Mary, hail, to thee;
Promise of Prophets, Mary, hail, to thee.

Queen of the Patriarchs, all hail, to thee;
Instructress of Apostles, hail, to thee;
Strength of the Martyrs, Mary, hail, to thee;
Reward of the Confessors, hail, to thee;
Honour and Crown of Virgins, hail, to thee.

Thou Hope of all the living, hail, to thee;
Refreshment of the dying, hail, to thee;
Consoler of the suffering, hail, to thee;
Thou Succour of the tempted, hail, to thee;
Helper of Holy Souls, all hail, to thee.

In each temptation, Mary, pray for me;
In tribulation, Mary, pray for me;
In time of suffering, Mary, pray for me;
In hour of weakness, Mary, pray for me;
In death's last agony, oh, pray for me.

Forgiveness of my sins, obtain for me;
All Graces that I need, obtain for me;
A perfect stedfast Faith, obtain for me;
A sure and settled Hope, obtain for me;
A tender Charity, obtain for me.

In trial, Mary, oh, we look to thee;
In heaviness and woe, we look to thee;
In sickness and in pain, we look to thee;

In loss of all things dear, we look to thee;
In death and judgment, lo, we look to thee.

When morning breaks, O Mother, be with me.
And as the day wanes, Mother, stay by me.
When evening falls, dear Mother, rest with me.
When night shall come, O Mother, watch by me;
And when I sleep - oh, let me wake with thee.

The Voice of the Beloved

The Voice of the Beloved: Sweet to me
The shadow He hath made beneath the Tree,
Where from earth's glare He seeks to shelter me.
Behold, He cometh quickly. 'Lo, I be -
All else forgetting - Lord, awaiting Thee.'

The Voice of the Beloved: see, how He
Descendeth from the mountains. Verily,
He looketh through the lattices, to see
The beatings of her heart; so she may be
Alone, when He shall whisper secretly.

The Voice of the Beloved: lo, 'tis He
Whose Word was uttered in Eternity.
She was the Chosen of His Love, and He
Hath made her beautiful, that she may be
The Crown of all His works, eternally.

The Voice of the Beloved: 'Haste,' saith He,
'Arise, My Dove, arise; for verily,
The winter now is past, the rain gone by,
The flowers upspring with gladness. Rise and see
Our Garden perfected through thee and Me.'

The Voice of the Beloved: 'Lo, I be
For ever ready, Lord, awaiting Thee.
Our Vineyard flourisheth: and soon shall be
Destroyed the foxes, which maliciously
Our Vine would injure. Lo, I wait for Thee.'

The Voice of the Beloved: 'Let me see
Thy loving Face, O Lord, that it may be
Imprinted on my heart and memory.

As I to Him, so is my Love to me.
Arise, my Lord; Thy servant waits for Thee.

'Among the Lilies shall our pastures be
Transplanted to our Garden: there will we
In everlasting peace and jubilee
The Kingdom govern - which unchangeably
Lies in the Bosom of the Trinity.'

Beata Pacis Visio

Thus twenty Centuries of time shall be,
O gracious Mother, fraught with care for thee;
Through persecution, strife and calumny,
Through good report and evil destiny,
The Bride thou cheerest on to victory.

The Bride of Jesus, who is bound to be
The sharer of His Cross. Ah, verily,
Through all Time's ages, is she found to be
A mark for buffets, blows and contumely,
In birth-throes torn with anguish, woefully.

In birth-throes of her children, who will be
Her heaviest burthen, rending endlessly
The seamless Garment woven for her by Thee;
Yea, mangling all her limbs, 'till she shall be
Unrecognisable, in verity.

The Bleeding Spouse she follows, following Thee
Along the rugged steeps of Calvary:
All glorious within, though outwardly
Inglorious, travel stained, as they must be
Who fight for freedom, or for victory.

O Ark of Indestructibility:
The Hidden Manna lies enshrined in thee
That daily falls from Heaven. No enemy
Can thee detain in vile captivity,
No wound may deadly prove, afflicting thee.

When on the height of gruesome Calvary
Was lifted up the Sign that set us free,
The King's last Act of Love, in mystery,

Opened His Side; and, sacramentally,
Gave to the world His Bride that was to be.

And now with Holy John, behold, and see
The Bride descending in the panoply
Of Glory Uncreated. Fair is she
Adorned for bridal, in His radiancy
Who chose and loved her from eternity.

Epilogue

- *Apocalypse 1:13-17; 10:7; 20:9,10*

The Eagle of Patmos hath pierced the dark ages,
  And gazed on the Mystery woeful of Sin;
In the Light Beatific were written those pages
  Which lends them a glory without and within.
For the light which first fell on his luminous gaze
  Was the Vision of Jesus, the Friend of the Past;
The Master adored in those long-ago days,
  Now in Glorified Nature the First and the Last.
Upborne in the spirit 'mid Splendours eternal,
    His eagle-eyed view gageth wonders sublime;
Undimmed by the vapours of malice infernal,
  Unchecked, undisturbed by the spectres of time.
For lo, on that mystical picture, engraven
  The Truth of All-being created, is seen -
Tis the Mystery of Godliness stooping from Heaven,
  To crush out for ever the Mystery of Sin.

LAUS JESU ET MARLE

About This EBook

The text of this ebook is taken from the book *Mary: The Perfect Woman* by Emily Mary Shapcote. It has the sub-title *One Hundred and Fifty Rhythms in Honor of The Mystical Life of Our Lady*. The edition used was published by The Dolphin Press of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1904, and has a preface by Cardinal Herbert Vaughn.

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The cover image is a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, date and artist unknown. The statue is in the Corpus Domini church in Milan, Italy, was photographed on 27 July 2014 by Maurizio OM Ongaro, and the image was swiped from Wikimedia Commons.

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